

On Top Of The News Email:news@arubatoday.com website: www.arubatoday.com Tel:+297 582-7800 Tuesday, January 28, 2014

COLD SNAP



Brutal cold returns to US Midwest, hits flights

Ron Selleck checks his propane supply at his home in North Branch, Minn., as another round of bitter cold temperatures settle in across the US Midwest, (AP Photo/The Star Tribune, Jerry Holt)

Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Severely cold weather in the U.S. Midwest caused more than 500 flights to be cancelled at Chicago's two main air-

ports Monday. A weather pattern that's driving Arctic air south is keeping temperatures far below freezing into Tuesday. Chicago Public Schools called off

Monday's classes for its nearly 400,000 students. In Michigan, highways closed as snow and sub-freezing temperatures played a role in multiple

crashes Sunday. At least three people died over the weekend because of weather-related accidents. "This is similar to what we had three weeks ago"

in terms of life-threatening conditions, said Sarah Marquardt, a National Weather Service meteorologist.

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EXPLORER CRUISE RETURNING TO US AFTER OUTBREAK

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PROGRESS IN SYRIA PEACE TALKS STALLS ON ASSAD FUTURE

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LatAm FMs kick off Cuba summit

ANDREA RODRIGUEZ
PETER ORSI
Associated Press

HAVANA (AP) — Foreign ministers from 33 Latin American and Caribbean nations met Monday in the Cuban capital for a summit of Western Hemisphere countries minus the United States and Canada.

Topics of discussion included the cultivation of traditional crops like quinoa, historical disputes such as Argentina's claim to the British-controlled Falkland Islands and initiatives like

promoting literacy in the region.

Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez says he was "deeply pleased" and the talks were characterized by an "extraordinary and permanent spirit of solution."

Heads of state are to meet Tuesday and Wednesday at the second summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, or CELAC for its initials in Spanish.

The secretary-general of the Organization of Ameri-

can States, Jose Miguel Insulza, arrived later in the day after being invited to attend as an observer—an unusual encounter 52 years after Cuba was kicked out of the regional bloc.

Insulza's chief of staff, Hugo Zela, said the OAS has no record of a secretary-general visiting Cuba.

The OAS was formed in 1948. In 2009 it ended Cuba's suspension, but Havana said it was not interested in rejoining a group it accuses of obeying Washington's interests. □



Foreign Ministers wave while posing for the official photo of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States foreign ministers in Havana, Cuba, Monday, Jan. 27, 2014. Leaders from Latin America and the Caribbean are arriving in Havana to participate in the summit. The formal meetings of heads of state begin Tuesday.

(AP Photo/Franklin Reyes)

Mexico nabs cartel leader Plancarte

E. EDUARDO CASTILLO
MARK STEVENSON
Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexican soldiers and federal police on Monday captured one of the four top leaders of Mexico's Knights Templar drug cartel in Michoacan state, which has seen fighting between the gang and vigilante groups that have sprung over the past year.

An official at the federal Attorney General's Office, who was not authorized to be quoted by name, revealed the arrest of Dionicio Loya Plancarte, alias "El Tio," or The Uncle.

The 58-year-old Loya Plan-

carte had a 30-million peso (\$2.25 million) reward on his head from the Mexican government for drug, organized crime and money-laundering charges. He was considered one of the country's three dozen most-wanted drug lords in the late 2000s.

The Knights Templar ruled many parts of Michoacan with an iron fist, demanding extortion payments from businesses, farmers and workers. "Self-defense" groups rose up in arms last year and have gained ground against the cartel in recent months. Federal police and army troops were dispatched to bring

peace to the troubled region, but the vigilantes have demanded the arrest of the cartel's major leaders before they lay down their guns.

Loya Plancarte got his nickname, "The Uncle," because he is believed to be the uncle of another top leader, Enrique Plancarte Solis. One of the longtime bosses of La Familia Michoacana, a predecessor cartel, Loya Plancarte joined Plancarte Solis and Servando Gomez in forming the Knights Templar after the purported death of La Familia leader Nazario Moreno in a shootout with federal forces in 2010. □

LATIN & CARIBBEAN BRIEFS

Honduran leader sworn-in, urges help

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras (AP) — Conservative Juan Orlando Hernandez has been sworn in as president of Honduras after urging the United States to continue its support for counter-narcotics operations. The 46-year-old lawyer said he would follow a policy of "zero tolerance" against violent crime and drug-trafficking. "Let me be clear: time has run out for the criminals," he said. Hernandez says the U.S. must recognize its responsibility for Honduras' homicide statistics, because the vast majority of killings are linked to the south-to-north drug trade.

Cuba targets terror, money laundering

HAVANA (AP) — Cuba has enacted a law letting authorities freeze bank accounts found to belong to terrorists or entities linked to al-Qaida or the Taliban. The law says it targets money laundering, terror financing, arms proliferation and other illicit financial dealings. It also aims to bring Cuba in line with international conventions. The measure was signed by President Raul Castro and published into law over the weekend in the government's Official Gazette. It is not known whether Cuba has ever detected any accounts linked to terrorism or money laundering.

14 dead, 21 injured in Brazil bus crash

BRASILIA, Brazil (AP) — Brazilian authorities say 14 people were killed after a passenger bus slammed into a bulldozer that had fallen from a truck transporting it. Police say the accident happened in the northeastern state of Bahia. Local media reports citing officials at two hospitals say at least 21 people were also injured. Police couldn't confirm that figure, nor the gravity of injuries. The accident happened as the bus was heading around a curve early Monday and struck the bulldozer. The driver of the truck that was carrying the dozer fled the scene.

4 St. Lucians appear in court for killing

VIEUX FORT, St. Lucia (AP) — Four men charged in the recent killing of a 62-year-old British tourist in St. Lucia have appeared in court. The young men covered their faces as they entered the courtroom this weekend to respond to charges of murder and robbery in the Jan. 17 death of Roger Pratt. The St. Lucia citizens did not speak and were not required to enter a plea. The suspects are scheduled to appear in court again on Feb. 4. An autopsy found that Pratt died from asphyxia. His wife, Margaret Pratt, also was beaten and was treated for cuts and bruises.

\$1.9M worth of pot seized in Bahamas

NASSAU, Bahamas (AP) — Authorities have seized some 2,100 pounds (953 kilograms) of marijuana from a boat they say docked in the Bahamas after it was seen speeding through nearby waters. The U.S. Justice Department said this weekend that the marijuana is estimated to be worth more than \$1.9 million. Officials with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration and Bahamas police arrested eight Bahamians they say were hiding nearby. The boat was docked on the west end of Grand Bahama Island.



The Royal Caribbean International's Explorer of the Seas is docked at Charlotte Amalie Harbor in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, before heading back to its home port in the U.S. on Monday after hundreds of passengers and crew members fell ill with vomiting and diarrhea.

(AP Photo/Thomas Layer)

Cruise heads home after outbreak

DAVID McFADDEN

Associated Press

KINGSTON, Jamaica (AP)

— A Royal Caribbean cruise ship headed back to its home port in the U.S. on Monday after hundreds of passengers and crew members fell ill with vomiting and diarrhea during what was supposed to be a 10-day getaway in the sun.

The Miami-based company announced Sunday evening that it was cutting short the Explorer of the Seas' jaunt in the Caribbean a few hours after officials from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention boarded the ship during its U.S. Virgin Islands port call to investigate the illness.

According to the CDC, 577 out of 3,050 passengers reported being ill during the voyage that left Bayonne, New Jersey, last Tuesday. That's nearly 19 percent of the vacationers. Forty-nine crew members also got sick.

Royal Caribbean's medical team said the symptoms were consistent with the common and highly contagious norovirus. It is rarely fatal, but the CDC says it can be serious, especially for youngsters and older adults. The virus spreads quickly in closed quarters through contaminated food or liquids, contaminated surfaces, and direct contact with an infected

person.

CDC spokeswoman Bernadette Burden said tests would have to confirm what caused the illness outbreak on the 15-deck ship. Five samples were shipped to the U.S. health agency's lab Sunday.

"We won't know for a couple of days what the pathogen is. Cruise ships are unique. It can be difficult to identify a specific source," she said in a Monday email.

She said there had been no fatalities and no one was removed from the ship.

An Explorer of the Seas passenger named Arnee Dodd fell ill aboard the ship last week and was quarantined like the other sick people.

In a Sunday tweet to The Associated Press, the Connecticut woman said: "We are all better, quarantine is over and ship has been sanitized every day."

Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. said Sunday evening that "new reports of illness have decreased day-over-day, and many guests are again up and about. Nevertheless, the disruptions caused by the early wave of illness means that we were unable to deliver the vacation our guests were expecting."

It said a full sanitization program would be carried out after the Explorer of the Seas reached its home port Wednesday. □

Brutal cold returns to US Midwest, hits flights

Continued from front

"With wind chills in the minus 30 to minus 40 range, you can get frostbite within 10 minutes on exposed skin."

Residents of Minnesota and Wisconsin faced similar if even somewhat more severe weather.

Companies offering delivery services were inundated with business as Arctic air blasted the central U.S. on Monday for the second time in weeks, disrupting

the lives of even the hardest Midwesterners.

The brutally cold weather has brought a spike in business for GrubHub Seamless, a company that lets users order food online from restaurants and have the food delivered.

"Across the board, restaurant and delivery drivers are dealing with an influx of orders," Allie Mack, a spokeswoman for the company said in an email.

Not only that, but people seem to appreciate the drivers more,

with Mack saying that during the Polar Vortex earlier this month, tipping was up by double digits in Detroit, Cleveland, Minneapolis, Chicago.

And, for some reason, deliveries of buffalo chicken sandwiches jumped 37 percent.

"You figure people are probably being more generous to their drivers because their drivers are the ones braving the conditions while you're on your couch in your pajamas," Mack said. □



Ice floats in the frozen Chicago River as seen from the Michigan Avenue Bridge in Chicago, Monday, Jan. 27, 2014. Below-zero high temperatures expecting to last 2 1/2 days have returned to many parts of the Midwest bringing with it wind chills ranging from the negative teens to temperatures colder than 40 below zero.

(AP Photo/Sun-Times Media, Michael R. Schmidt)

US rules on surveillance data requests

MATT APUZZO

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WASHINGTON — The Obama administration will allow Internet companies to talk more specifically about when they are forced to turn over customer data to government agents, the Justice Department said Monday.

The new rules resolve legal fights with Google, Microsoft, Yahoo and Facebook before the nation's secret surveillance court.

But while under the terms of the new arrangement, customers will have a somewhat better idea of how often the government demands information, they still will not know what is being collected, or how much.

The dispute began last year after a former government contractor, Edward J. Snowden, revealed that FBI and National Security Agency surveillance programs rely heavily on data from U.S. email providers, video-chat services and social-networking companies.

Sometimes, FBI agents demand data with administrative subpoenas known as a national security letter.

Other times, the Justice Department makes the demand under the authority of the surveillance court but without a specific warrant.

Either way, the justification is typically secret and companies are prohibited from

saying much.

The companies wanted to be able to say how many times they received court orders, known as FISA orders after the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act. The government opposed that. Currently,

they are allowed to disclose only the number of administrative subpoenas known as national security letters, but only in increments of 1,000. That made it impossible for users to know whether government agents grabbed data from their email provider once or 999 times.

Companies say that has hurt their businesses and eroded confidence in the U.S. technology industry. □

Obama annual speech to take aim at inequality

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama's annual State of the Union address a year ago was a sweeping declaration of liberal values, made possible by the momentum of his recent re-election. This year, after his legislative goals largely crumbled in what's been called the



President Barack Obama works at his desk in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, Monday, Jan. 27, 2014, ahead of Tuesday night's State of the Union speech.

(AP Photo/Jacquelyn Martin)

worst year of his presidency, Obama is less popular than before.

Much of Congress faces re-election in November, and Obama's speech on Tuesday night is likely to do little to help his fellow Democrats as they try to keep their fragile majority in the Senate. Although not explicitly political, his speech before millions on live television will frame an economic argument that

Democrats hope will resonate with voters.

Obama would see any hope of moving any of his agenda through Congress evaporate if Democrats lose the Senate in November. Democrats are less confident about their prospects for taking back control of the House of Representatives, where Republicans are expected to retain their majority.

Obama is expected to de-

scribe a choice between an America where all parts of the population have opportunities to improve their lives and one where prosperity is disproportionately enjoyed by a select few. In recent weeks, the president has sought to focus the nation's attention on trends of inequality and lower social mobility that he's promising to address in his final years in office.

With the economy still a top

issue for most voters, Democrats see issues of economic fairness and expanding access to the middle class as their best chance to win or stay in office. "Middle-class security is the defining issue of our time," said Rep. Steve Israel, who chairs the Democrats' campaign arm for the House of Representatives. When Obama invited Senate Democrats to a meeting at the White House this month, much of the session focused on how Democrats wanted him to focus on the idea of expanding economic opportunity in his State of the Union, said a White House official, who wasn't authorized to discuss a private meeting by name and requested anonymity. Republicans also have taken notice of the public's interest. In recent weeks, Republican lawmakers have publicly offered their own ideas about reducing poverty in the U.S. In an AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research poll last month, 68 percent said they'd like the federal government expend a moderate or great amount of effort reducing the gap between rich and poor. By comparison, less than half wanted the government to focus on advancing gay rights or fighting climate change. □

Florida: Congressman, facing pressure after cocaine charge, to resign

ASHLEY PARKER

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WASHINGTON — Rep. Trey Radel, R-Fla., will resign from Congress effective Monday evening, according to a letter he sent to House Speaker John A. Boehner of Ohio.

Radel, 37, a freshman legislator, pleaded guilty in November to a misdemeanor charge of buying 3.5 grams of cocaine in Washington and was sentenced to a year of probation. Although he had quietly returned to Congress in January after nearly a month at a private rehabilitation center in Naples, Fla., Radel announced his

resignation plans Monday morning.

Referring to his "personal struggles," Radel wrote: "While I have dealt with those issues on a personal level, it is my belief that professionally I cannot fully and effectively serve as a United States representative to the place I love and call home, Southwest Florida." When he was first charged, Radel said he struggled "with the disease of alcoholism."

Radel's resignation was first reported by Politico.

In his letter, Radel thanked his colleagues for their "tremendous support and encouragement."

"As an eternal optimist, I know there are great things in store for our country when we find ways to work together," he wrote.

"Whether it is as a father, a husband, or in any future endeavor, I hope to contribute what I can to better our country in the years to come." Radel, a former television anchorman and conservative talk show host, represents Florida's 19th Congressional District, which includes Naples and Fort Myers. He won election in 2012 with 62 percent of the vote.

The district is solidly Republican, and his resignation is unlikely to benefit Demo-

crats. But while Radel was still in rehabilitation, a growing number of prominent Republicans — including the chairman of the Florida Republican Party and Florida's governor, Rick Scott — called for his resignation. Scott, working with the office of Florida's secretary of state, will set the date for a special election.

Former Rep. Connie Mack IV, who in 2012 gave up the 19th District seat for an unsuccessful Senate run, has been trying to rally support for another bid. Lizbeth Benacquisto, the majority leader of the Florida state Senate, is also considered a likely candidate. □

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JEMMA WYNNE

Maryland mall reopens after deadly weekend shooting



Ken Ulman, the Howard County Executive, speaks at a news conference outside of The Mall in Columbia in Columbia, Md. Shoppers returned on Monday to the Maryland mall where a shooting two days earlier in a skateboard and apparel store left three people dead.

(Jonathan Hanson/The New York Times)

THEO EMERY

EMMA G. FITZSIMMONS
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COLUMBIA, Md. - Shoppers returned on Monday to the Maryland mall where a shooting two days earlier in a skateboard and apparel store left three people dead.

And yet, behind the attempts at normalcy, signs

of Saturday's shooting could be found. Zumiez, the store where the shooting occurred, remained closed, and a temporary wall had been built across its entrance.

On the wall was a message saying the store would be closed until further notice in "loving memory" of Brianna Benlolo, 21, and Tyler

Johnson, 25, the two employees who were killed last Saturday.

Workers placed a giant bouquet of white roses and hydrangeas in the courtyard of the mall and people left condolence messages. After writing notes, well-wishers tossed a single white flower into the mall's fountain. By midafternoon,

the water was covered by hundreds of flowers.

Police officers and mall security guards walked along corridors and checked stores in what a mall security official said was an increased presence of law enforcement personnel. The Howard County police chief, William J. McMahon, accompanied elected officials as they toured the mall, greeting shoppers and stopping in the bustling food court.

Investigators said on Monday that they are still trying to determine why the gunman, identified as Darion Marcus Aguilar, 19, took a taxi to the Mall in Columbia and shot the two workers before turning the gun on himself. A spokeswoman for the Howard County police said that there was no information about the investigation.

taining two homemade explosive devices, the police said.

Aguilar, who lived in College Park, Md., with his mother, had written in his journal about being unhappy, the police said, though the authorities have not disclosed the reasons behind his despair. Aguilar did not have a criminal record and the police said they do not believe he had a relationship with the victims.

When the mall opened at 1 p.m. Monday, dozens of people had been waiting to get in, and by afternoon, the mall was crowded with shoppers.

Quy Vo, 19, who worked at Zumiez, but was not there at the time of the shooting, said that he recognized Aguilar from photographs as being the same man who "occasionally" came into the store. Vo said he had not known Aguilar and was not sure if Benlolo or Johnson had known him either.

"We're clueless," Vo said, who added that he had come to the mall to pay his respects. □

Charlotte officer indicted in shooting

KIM SEVERSON

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CHARLOTTE, N.C. - A grand jury Monday indicted a white police officer who fired 10 shots into a young black man who had driven off the road in a suburban neighborhood here and was apparently looking for help.

It was the second time a grand jury had heard the case. The first panel, which convened a week ago, did not indict the officer, Randall Kerrick, on voluntary manslaughter charges, but suggested that prosecutors come back with a less-

er charge.

Instead, prosecutors presented the same charge to another group of jurors Monday. This group indicted Kerrick on voluntary manslaughter charges in the death of Jonathan Ferrell, 24, a former football player at Florida A&M who had been dropping off a friend early one morning in September when his car went off the road.

He stumbled up an embankment and knocked on a door. A woman inside, home alone with her infant, called the police in a panic. □

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Restaurant industry resists proposal to raise tip wages



Tom Boucher, who owns seven restaurants in New Hampshire and said increased wages would reduce the number of waiters each restaurant employed, in Bedford, N.H., Jan. 17, 2014. Workers say they cannot live on restaurant wages, while owners claim they cannot afford higher pay.

(Cheryl Senter/The New York Times)

STEVEN GREENHOUSE

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Nearly 50 years ago, federal law created a lower minimum wage for workers who receive tips. Congress decreed that it could not be less than 50 percent of the federal minimum wage.

But when the minimum wage inched up - to \$5.25 in 1996 under President Bill Clinton - Congress agreed, in a concession to the restaurant industry, to let the 50 percent rule lapse. Under federal law, restaurant owners are required to pay a minimum of \$2.13

an hour toward a waiter's wages as long as customers' tips lift the waiter's pay to the \$7.25 federal minimum wage. (If tips are too small to reach the minimum wage, the restaurant is required to top off the waiter's pay.)

Now, as some Democrat-

ic senators and President Barack Obama push to raise the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour, from \$7.25, they are also backing increases to the tip wage. Once again, the restaurant industry is fiercely opposed to a mandated increase.

Advocates for restaurant workers protest that waiters' pay has remained flat for years. The tip wage alone has gone unchanged since 1991: Taking inflation into account, the \$2.13 enacted back then is worth \$1.24 today. But the National Restaurant Association, which has played a pivotal role in keeping the tip wage unchanged, warns that if the tip wage is raised along with the federal minimum wage, customers will face higher menu prices and fewer waiters to serve them.

Scott DeFife, the restaurant association's executive vice president for government affairs, warns that any wage increases have

a cost. "The cost comes from somewhere - prices might be increased, operations might be cut back, different food choices might be offered, hours of operation might be diminished," he said.

"The National Restaurant Association claims it can't afford to raise wages, but it says this every time we talk about raising the minimum wage," Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, said in a Senate speech in December. Noting that the industry said it would be hurt badly by the 2007 minimum wage increase, which affected kitchen staff, Harkin said that "did not hurt the industry - in fact, the industry is doing remarkably well."

Labor Secretary Thomas E. Perez said the tip wage "hasn't been raised for more than two decades despite increases in the cost of living." But given stiff opposition among top Republicans, the chances of an increase passing Congress in a midterm election year are fairly slim. □

U.S. Justice Department examining banks' track record as gatekeepers

JESSICA SILVER-GREENBERG

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Federal prosecutors are trying to thwart the easy access that predatory lenders and dubious online merchants have to Americans' bank accounts by going after banks that fail to meet their obligations as gatekeepers to the U.S. financial system.

The Justice Department is currently weighing civil and criminal actions against dozens of banks, sending out subpoenas to more than 50 payment processors and the banks that do business with them, according to government officials.

In the new initiative, called "Operation Choke Point," the agency is scrutinizing banks both big and small over whether they, in exchange for handsome fees, enable businesses to illegally siphon billions of dollars from consumers' checking accounts, according to state and federal officials briefed on the

investigation.

The critical role played by banks largely plays out in the shadows because they typically do not deal directly with the Internet merchants. What they do is provide banking services to third-party payment processors, financial middlemen that, in turn, handle payments for their merchant customers.

Yet the crackdown has already come under fire from congressional lawmakers, including Rep. Darrell Issa, R-Calif., who heads the House Oversight Committee. The legislators have accused the Justice Department of trying to covertly quash the payday lending industry.

Justice Department officials brought a lawsuit this month against Four Oaks Bank of Four Oaks, N.C., accusing the bank of being "deliberately ignorant" that it was processing payments on behalf of unscrupulous merchants - including payday lenders and a Ponzi scheme. As a result,



James Dillon, who contends that payday lenders ransacked his checking account, at his home in Trinity, N.C., Jan. 23, 2014. Federal prosecutors are trying to thwart the easy access predatory lenders and online merchants have to American bank accounts, going after institutions that fail to meet their obligations as gatekeepers to the United States financial system.

(Travis Dove/The New York Times)

prosecutors say, the bank enabled the companies to illegally withdraw more than \$2.4 billion from the checking accounts of customers across the country. While the bank has reached a tentative \$1.2 million settlement with federal prosecutors, the effect of the lawsuit extends far beyond Four Oaks, and

federal prosecutors say this points to a problem rippling fast across the banking industry.

The new, more rigorous oversight could have a chilling effect on Internet payday lenders, which have migrated from storefronts to websites where they offer short-term loans at interest rates that often

exceed 500 percent annually. With the banks' help, the lenders who typically work with a third-party payment processor that has an account at the banks are able, authorities say, to automatically deduct payments from customers' checking accounts even in states where the loans are illegal. □

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Despite US market unrest, Fed likely to pare stimulus

MARTIN CRUTSINGER

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Just as Ben Bernanke prepares to turn the chairmanship of the Federal Reserve over to Janet Yellen, global markets are on edge over the prospect that she'll extend a policy he began: a steady pullback in the Fed's extraordinary economic stimulus.

Managing a slowdown in the Fed's bond purchases without roiling markets will pose a tough early test for Yellen, who succeeds Bernanke as Fed chair next week. The Fed's bond purchases have been intended to keep long-term loan rates low to spur spending and economic growth.

Investors have been nervous in part because a pullback in Fed bond buying will likely mean higher rates. Borrowing could weaken as a result. Many also fear that higher U.S. rates will lead some bond investors to move cash out of emerging markets and into the United States to seek higher returns. That fear has depressed currency values in emerging economies.

Once the Fed ends its meeting Wednesday, it's expected to announce an additional \$10 billion cut in its monthly bond purchases. Last month, the Fed said it would start reducing its monthly purchases from \$85 billion to \$75 billion. It decided to pull back mainly because of evidence the U.S. economy is strengthening and needs less support from the Fed.

Analysts expect the Fed to stick with that policy despite the turmoil in overseas markets, which has battered the currencies of Argentina, Turkey, Russia and other emerging economies. Those economies had previously enjoyed an inflow of investor money.

"Now, those countries are having to deal with a reversal of those flows," said David Jones, chief economist at DMJ Advisors and the author of a new book on the Fed. Jones sees the market turbulence as a "perfect illustration of the tricky transition that Yellen will have to manage" as the Fed winds down the programs it put in place after the financial crisis erupted in 2008.

Still, he doesn't think the Fed will diverge from the pace of its bond-buying reductions unless market turmoil begins to slow the U.S. economic recovery.

"As long as they see a strengthening economy and sustained improvement in labor market conditions, they will continue to taper bond purchases," Jones predicted.

Bernanke will end his tumultuous eight-year tenure at the Fed — officially, at the close of business Friday — amid tentative signs of a stronger U.S. economy. Employers created only 74,000 jobs in December, far below the 214,000 average of the previous four months. But many analysts think the lackluster December total marked a temporary pause or a statistical aberration. "The preponderance of evidence shows that the economy is continuing to recover," said David Wyss, a former Fed economist and now an economics professor at Brown University.

Throughout 2013, the Fed bought \$85 billion a month in Treasury and mortgage bonds to try to keep long-term rates down to stimulate borrowing by businesses and consumers. Bernanke's first mention of a pullback in bond purchases, in mid-2013, triggered a mini-panic in the stock market. □

US Financial Front: American sales of new homes drop 7%

MARTIN CRUTSINGER

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. sales of new homes fell in December for a second consecutive month but even with the pause at the end of the year, sales for all of 2013 climbed to the highest level in five years. Sales of new homes dropped 7 percent last month to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 414,000, the Commerce Department reported Monday. In November,

Capital Economics. "Mortgage rates are very low in a historical context."

Analysts said much of the December drop in sales likely reflected severe weather in many parts of the country during the month and some of those factors will likely act to depress sales further in January. By region, sales fell the most in December in the Northeast, a decline of 36.4 percent. Sales were down 8.8 percent in the West and 7.3 percent in

during the summer when mortgage rates jumped on indications the Federal Reserve might soon start reducing the bond purchases it was making to keep long-term interest rates low.

But analysts are looking for housing to regain some of its lost momentum as the industry enters the all-important spring buying season. Analysts expect that continued improvements in the labor market will boost incomes and that



A construction worker builds a new home in Wilmette, Ill. The Commerce Department released new home sales data for December on Monday, Jan. 27, 2014. (AP Photo/Nam Y. Huh)

sales had fallen 3.9 percent.

For the whole year, sales were up 16.4 percent to 428,000, the highest level since 2008.

It marked the second year that sales have risen after six consecutive annual declines as the housing industry was rocked by the collapse of a housing bubble. Sales of new homes peaked at 1.28 million in 2005.

Economists said continued job gains and a strengthening in the overall economy should help boost sales further in 2014.

"We continue to be upbeat about the outlook for new home sales," said Paul Diggle, an economist at

the South. Sales rose 17.6 percent in the Midwest.

The median price of a new home was \$270,200 in December, up 4.6 percent from a year ago and up 0.6 percent from November. The median is the point where half the homes sell for more and half for less.

There were 171,000 new homes on the market at the end of December, a drop of 2.8 percent from November. At the December sales pace, that would represent a 5 month supply. That is lower than the six-month supply that economists view as healthy.

Housing was one of the strongest sectors of the recovery in the first half of 2013, but then it hit a lull

will lead to stronger demand for homes.

Sales of previously occupied homes rebounded 1 percent in December helping that market to sales for all of 2013 of 5.09 million. That was the best performance since 2006 when sales totaled 6.48 million. However, the sales gains in both 2005 and 2006 represented an unsustainable housing boom which collapsed, helping drag the economy into a deep recession which triggered a painful retrenchment in housing.

Analysts expect housing will keep recovering in 2014 but they don't look for the sales gains to be as large as they were in 2013. □

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Ukraine:

President ready to scrap anti-protest law

JIM HEINTZ

MARIA DANILOVA

Associated Press

KIEV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukraine's beleaguered president on Monday agreed to scrap harsh anti-protest laws that set off a wave of clashes between protesters and police over the past week, a potentially substantial concession to the opposition that stopped short of meeting all of its demands.

In a possibly major sticking point, a proposed amnes-

mostly peaceful protests over his rejection of a deal to deepen ties with the 28-nation European Union. At a meeting between top opposition figures and Yanukovych late Monday "a political decision was made on scrapping the laws of Jan. 16, which aroused much discussion," Lukash said.

She made no mention of a key opposition demand — that Yanukovych resign. One of the opposition figures, Arseniy Yatsenyuk,

reaction from the relatively small crowd gathered in bitter cold near midnight. A key issue will be the amnesty offer, which could allow for the release of dozens of protesters currently being held in jail in exchange for an end to the demonstrations. The statement did not say the opposition would agree to those terms. Doing so could infuriate radical factions within the broad-based protest movement, such as the



Ukraine's President Viktor Yanukovych, second left, talks to opposition leaders Oleh Tyahnybok, first right, Vitali Klitschko, second right, and Arseniy Yatsenyuk, third right, in Kiev, Ukraine, Monday, Jan. 27, 2014. (AP Photo/Andrei Mosienko)

ty for arrested protesters would not be offered unless demonstrators stopped occupying buildings and ended their round-the-clock protests and tent camp on Kiev's central Independence Square, according to a statement by Justice Minister Elena Lukash on the presidential website.

President Viktor Yanukovych has been under increasing pressure since he pushed the tough laws through parliament, setting off clashes and protests in other parts of the country in a sharp escalation of tensions after weeks of

turned down the prime minister's job, which Yanukovych had offered him on Saturday, the statement said.

Eliminating the laws, which is likely to be done in a special parliament session Tuesday, appears to be a serious step back for the government. The session is also expected to include a discussion of government responsibility in the crisis, suggesting a cabinet reshuffle could be imminent. It was not immediately clear how the announcement would be received. On Independence Square, there was no immediate

group called Right Sector that has driven much of the recent violence. Several hours before the statement, Right Sector issued its own demands, which include punishing officials responsible for the deaths and abuse of protesters, disbanding Ukraine's feared riot police and locating all missing opposition figures.

Protest leaders say scores of people have gone missing, presumably arrested. Three protesters died in the clashes last week, two of whom were shot by hunting rifles, which police insist they do not use. □

Afghanistan:

Formal prisoner release orders issued

MATTHEW ROSENBERG

AZAM AHMED

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KABUL, Afghanistan — Despite U.S. protests, the Afghan government has issued formal release orders for 37 prisoners who are regarded by the NATO-led coalition as dangerous insurgents responsible for the deaths of Americans and Afghans. The release orders set the stage for a renewed confrontation between President Hamid Karzai and the United States. The Americans say there is enough evidence to prosecute the men, who are being held at what was once the main U.S. prison in Afghanistan, at Bagram. But Afghan officials appear determined to release as many detainees as possible. Karzai called the prison a "Taliban-making factory" over the weekend, and told reporters, "God willing, I will close Bagram."

U.S. officials received that message Sunday when they were informed by Afghan officials that formal orders to release the 37 detainees had been issued last week, a senior U.S. military official said. The step was not a surprise — Karzai gave instructions earlier this month to proceed with the releases — but it prompted the U.S. military command to renew its public fight to stop the process. In a statement issued Monday before the Afghan authorities could make their own announcement about the release orders, the Americans called the plan "a major step backward in further developing the rule of law in Afghanistan." It said the Afghan authorities would be "releasing back to society dangerous insurgents who have Afghan blood on their hands." The dispute over whether

to release the detainees has added to a widening rift between Karzai and his U.S. supporters. At its center is a long-term security agreement that would keep U.S. troops and money in Afghanistan after the NATO combat mission ends this year, and would allow the U.S. to retain bases in Afghanistan for drone aircraft that can attack militants in remote areas and monitor Pakistan's nuclear arsenal. Karzai has put off signing the agreement, and his public statements have turned increasingly hostile to the U.S., at times echoing statements by the Taliban. He has suggested that Americans were ultimately to blame for all civilian deaths from the conflict in the country. The question of the detainees, long a thorny problem in Afghan-U.S. relations, appeared settled in March when the U.S. agreed to turn the prison, adjacent to Bagram Air Base north of Kabul, over to Afghan control. Under that agreement, a review board appointed by Karzai began examining the cases of detainees who were already there or who have been captured since then. A senior U.S. military official said that the United States expected the commission to release about one-third of the detainees and order the rest to stand trial. But the release rate has proved to be much higher: 648 out of the 760 cases reviewed so far. Of those ordered released, 88 are still in Bagram, and the Americans have been pushing for months to have them prosecuted, arguing that freeing them over U.S. objections would violate the prison handover agreement, and would call into question any future deals with Afghanistan. □



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Progress in Syria peace talks stalls on Assad's future

ZEINA KARAM

Associated Press

GENEVA (AP) — The key issue of a transitional government to replace President Bashar Assad blocked any progress Monday in Syrian peace talks, described by one delegate as "a dialogue of the deaf."

The chief U.N. mediator expressed frustration over inflammatory public remarks by the two sides as he sought to identify some less-contentious issues in hopes of achieving any progress at all at the bargaining table.

But even the most modest attempts at confidence-building measures faltered — including humanitarian aid convoys to besieged parts of the central city of Homs and the release of detainees. Veteran mediator Lakhdar Brahimi somberly declared at the end of the day that he had little to report.

"There are no miracles here," Brahimi said, adding that both sides nevertheless appeared to have the will to continue the discussions. Asked how he planned to bridge the enormous gap between the two sides, the veteran diplomat quipped: "Ideas, I'll take them with great pleasure."

The gulf between the two sides was on full display at a turbulent morning session in which the delegations from the opposition and the Syrian government faced off on the question of Assad's future.

The Western-backed Syrian National Coalition wants an interim replacement for Assad, reiterating at every opportunity that the stated goal of the peace conference, agreed upon by international powers in preliminary talks in June, is to establish a transitional government with full executive

powers.

But Assad, whose troops have a tenuous upper hand in Syria, has said he has no intention of stepping down and, on the contrary, may run again for president later this year. His delegates have capitalized on the ascendancy of Islamic militants, saying the priority at the peace conference was to find ways to combat terrorism.

"We came here with the intention of discussing a transitional governing body and they came with the intention of consecrating Bashar Assad's presence," said Rima Fleihan, a member of the coalition's negotiating team.

Murhaf Jouejati of the coalition said the meeting ended on a "sour note," and the session was broken up by Brahimi after the government delegation became confrontational.

"We thought there was no point in continuing this since it was going to be a dialogue of the deaf," Jouejati said.

Syria's uprising began in March 2011 with largely peaceful protests that eventually turned into an insurgency and full blown civil war after a harsh military crackdown. The war has become a proxy conflict between regional powerhouses Iran and Saudi Arabia, with hints of a throwback to the Cold War as Russia and the United States back opposite sides. Despite the rancorous rhetoric outside the conference room, both sides have said they won't withdraw from the talks.

Brahimi said the parties were talking to the media "too much," adding that he asked them to respect the confidentiality of the discussions and avoid exaggerations. Still, all signs

pointed to impasse. White House spokesman Jay Carney said the U.S. was "realistic about how difficult this is going to be,"

but we are completely convinced that this is the only way forward for Syria, and that's through negotiations."

"What's important is that the two parties have sat in the same room over the past several days to discuss critical issues. □



Monzer Akbik, center, a Syrian opposition spokesman, briefs journalists at the United Nations headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, Monday, Jan. 27, 2014. Akbik said the coalition was still determined to stay for the political talks set to begin Monday despite accusing the government of stalling.

(AP Photo/Anja Niedringhaus)



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Near Havana: Cuba, Brazil formally open new port

MARIEL, Cuba (AP) — The leaders of Cuba and Brazil on Monday inaugurated the first phase of a port overhaul project near Havana that is billed as a cornerstone of Cuba's economic future.

Brazil has contributed \$802 million in financing for the

Cuban President Raul Castro underlined the economic importance of Mariel, which will replace Havana as the island's shipping hub.

The new port will be able to accommodate deeper-drafting "post-Panamax" ships that will begin cross-

ribbean were gathering in Havana for a regional summit.

The presidents of Venezuela, Bolivia and Haiti also attended the ceremony. The sleepy town of Mariel is best known as the launch point for a mass exodus in 1980, when about 125,000



Brazil's President Dilma Rousseff, left, and Cuba's President Raul Castro cut the ribbon during the inauguration ceremony of the first phase of a port overhaul project in Mariel, Cuba, Monday, Jan. 27, 2014.

(AP Photo/Ismael Francisco)

Mariel project to date and will invest \$290 million more in the development of an adjacent industrial park and special economic zone, according to President Dilma Rousseff.

"Brazil is proud to partner with Cuba in this which is the first container-terminal port in the Caribbean with the capacity to integrate into the inter-oceanic logistical chain," Rousseff said.

ing the Panama Canal once an expansion project there is completed in the next year or so.

Mariel "will be the principal point of entry and exit for Cuba's exterior commerce," Castro said.

The two leaders spoke at a ceremony in Mariel, 28 miles (45 kilometers) west of the Cuban capital, as officials from 33 nations in Latin America and the Ca-

Cubans left in a span of six months, in what came to be known as the Mariel Boatlift.

Cuba hopes the port and economic zone will lure foreign investment.

They could also position the Communist-run nation to handle an expected trade boom if the United States someday lifts its 52-year-old economic embargo. □

Police suspect Tata executive killed himself

BANGKOK (AP) — Thai police said Monday they suspect a top British executive at Indian automotive giant Tata Motors committed suicide in a fall from a luxury hotel in Bangkok.

Managing Director Karl Slym died Sunday while in Thailand to attend a board meeting of the company's Thai affiliate.

Maj. Gen. Pornchai Sutheerakhun, head of the

Thai police forensic unit, said Slym died after falling from his room on the hotel's 22nd floor.

Police Lt. Somyot Bunnakaew said investigators believe Slym may have killed himself because of a suicide note left in the room referring to domestic problems. He said the letter was being analyzed to confirm it was written by Slym.

Slym joined Tata Motors

in October 2012 and was providing leadership to the company during a difficult market period, company Chairman Cyrus P. Mistry said in a statement.

He described Slym as "a valued colleague who was providing strong leadership at a challenging time for the Indian auto industry."

"In this hour of grief, our thoughts are with Karl's wife and family," he said. □

OAS head Insulza at Cuba summit in odd encounter

ANDREA RODRIGUEZ

Associated Press

HAVANA (AP) — The secretary-general of the Organization of American States arrived in Cuba on Monday to attend a regional summit, in an unusual encounter 52 years after Cuba was kicked out of the regional bloc.

Jose Miguel Insulza, a Chilean, was attending as an observer, so there was no official access to his arrival as was the case with visiting foreign ministers and heads of state. But Cuban officials confirmed his presence on the island to The Associated Press. Hugo Zela, Insulza's chief of staff, said the OAS, which was formed in 1948, has no record of a secretary-general visiting Cuba.

Tensions between Cuba and the OAS began shortly after the 1959 Cuban Revolution, when Washington put pressure on Fidel Castro's nascent Communist government through the organization.

Cuba was suspended from the bloc in 1962 at the height of the Cold War and many other nations turned their backs on Havana, with Mexico a notable exception.

By the dawn of the 21st century and with the Cold War nearly two decades in the rear-view mirror, some countries — particularly Venezuela under the late President Hugo Chavez, who called Castro a friend and mentor — began pushing for Cuba's reintegration into the hemispheric community.

In 2009 the OAS ended Cuba's suspension with the consent of Washington, which had been hesitant at first. But Havana balked at rejoining the bloc it sees as obeying U.S. interests.

"Cuba's position toward the OAS remains the same: We will not return," Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez said at the summit. "It has negative historical baggage as an instrument of domination by the United States that cannot be resolved through any reform." Nonetheless, Rodriguez said inviting Insulza to the CELAC summit was done out of "courtesy."

The CELAC was formed in 2011 and includes all the Western Hemisphere's nations except Canada and the United States.

"It should replace within a short time the OAS, that institution that did so much harm to integration," Ecuadorian Foreign Minister Roberto Patino said Monday.

Arturo Lopez-Levy, a Cuba analyst and lecturer at the University of Denver, said the CELAC's creation puts pressure on the OAS to remain relevant.

"The problems of the OAS are due to the fact that inter-American multilateralism has not been updated in respect to the changes in politics and balance of power that have taken place in (the region) and beyond as part of the rise of the global south," Lopez-Levy said.

"The second summit of the CELAC in Havana pours salt on that wound," he added.

For decades the argument for excluding Cuba from the OAS was its closed, single-party system. Havana has little tolerance for internal opposition and routinely harasses dissidents whom it officially labels treasonous "mercenaries."

Insulza has come under criticism particularly from the Cuban exile community for not scheduling meetings with island dissidents during the trip, in order to avoid making the summit hosts uncomfortable.

"It's startling," said Elizardo Sanchez, a nongovernmental human rights monitor in Cuba. □

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Egyptian military backs army chief for president

MAGGIE MICHAEL

Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Army chief Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi, who led the coup ousting Egypt's Islamist president, moved closer to declaring his candidacy to replace him, securing the military's backing on Monday for a presidential run, due by the end of April.

Though he's riding on a wave of nationalist fervor touting him as the nation's savior to bring stability, his candidacy is certain to enflame a violent backlash from Islamists.

A run by the 59-year-old el-Sissi, a U.S.-trained infantry officer, would be a new twist in Egypt's tumultuous transition, which began with 2011 revolt against autocratic President Hosni Mubarak — a veteran of the military who ruled for nearly 30 years — in the name of bringing civilian rule, reform and greater democracy.

The elections that followed were the country's first democratic vote and brought the Islamists to power, installing Muslim Brotherhood figure Mohammed Morsi as president, only for a large portion of the population to turn against them, accusing the Brotherhood of try-



A man sits under a banner with the photo of Defense Minister Gen. Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi as he drinks his tea at the "Al Mosheer Cafe" or "Marshal Cafe" in Cairo, Egypt, Tuesday, Jan. 27, 2014. The official news agency says that Egypt's top generals have endorsed a presidential run by the army chief who led the ouster of the Islamist president last summer.

(AP Photo/Mohammed Abu Zaid)

ing to monopolize power. Massive protests prompted el-Sissi to depose Morsi on July 3.

Since Morsi's ouster, Egypt has seen a wave of pro-military nationalist fervor and a return to prominence of security agencies that under Mubarak — and even after — were widely hated for abuses of power. Soon after the coup, millions of Egyptians answered el-Sissi's call to take to the street in rallies to "delegate" him to fight terrorism. Police have since waged a fierce crackdown on the Brotherhood, killing hundreds of supporters and arrest-

ing thousands more. The government branded the Brotherhood a terrorist organization, accusing it of orchestrating the violence. The group denies the charge, saying it is aimed at justifying the crackdown. The heavy-handed security crackdown also swept away secular-leaning activists and youth leaders as part of a wave of intimidation of critics, sparking fears among some of a return to a Mubarak-style police state.

"It will more or less be a one man show," said Ahmed Fawzi, the secretary general of the Social Democratic

party, part of the liberal alliance that supported Morsi's ouster. The fragile security situation only feeds into many Egyptians' need for a strong man who can restore stability. If el-Sissi runs in the elections due by the end of April, he would likely sweep the vote, given his popularity among a significant sector of the public, the lack of alternatives, the almost universal support in Egypt's media and the powerful atmosphere of intimidation against critics pervading the country.

But Fawzi predicted it also would likely provoke a backlash by Islamists.

"There is a personal vendetta between el-Sissi and

Islamists. No doubt violence will only increase under el-Sissi," Fawzy said.

While el-Sissi is yet to make a final announcement, the military's top body of generals, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, endorsed the idea after an hours-long meeting Monday to discuss el-Sissi's candidacy, according to military spokesman Col. Ahmed Mohammed Ali. "The council cannot but look with respect and homage to the desire of the wide masses of the great Egyptian people to nominate Gen. el-Sissi for the presidency, and considers it an assignment and commitment." □

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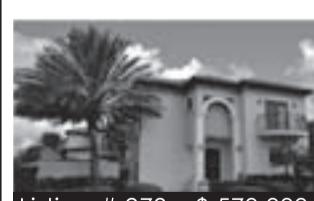
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Officials: H1N1 flu deaths hit 123 in Mexico

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexico is worried about a spike in the number of H1N1 flu cases and deaths, in the country that was the epicenter of the 2009 outbreak of the strain.

But even with 1,261 confirmed cases of the flu strain

and 123 deaths in the Jan. 1-23 period, the Health Department says the figures remain well below 2009 levels, when there were 1,479 deaths and more than 70,000 confirmed cases for the year as a whole. The H1N1 strain generally

hits people in the prime of their life, and memories remain sharp of the 2009 outbreak.

People have waited in long lines at vaccination posts set up in Mexico City's subway stations to get their flu shots. □

AP: Argentina details its dollar control easing

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — Argentines will be able to buy up to \$2,000 per month if they're up to date with their tax payments, the government said on Monday during the release of the first details of its easing of currency controls.

Argentina announced on Friday it was relaxing restrictions on the purchase of U.S. dollars. The decision was forced by double-digit inflation and the hardest drop in the local peso's value in 12 years. Cabinet Chief Jorge Capitanich said on Monday that to buy dollars, Argentines must also earn a net minimum of 7,200 pesos or about \$900 per month. Capitanich said the tax rate for cash purchases will be lowered to 20 percent from the current 35 percent. The tax rate will not be charged if the currency remains in an account for at least 365 days. Wage-earners will also be able to save in dollars. But Capitanich cleared up that the Argentine tax rate on credit card purchases made in dollars abroad will not be lowered to 20 percent from the current 35 percent, as he had announced last week.

Argentina is suffering a shortage of greenbacks due to one of the world's highest inflation rates, low foreign investment and the country's inability to tap global credit markets after a massive debt default during its 2001-2002 economic crisis. The center-left government relies on Central Bank reserves to meet its debt payments abroad and finance infrastructure at home. But the reserves have plunged to about \$29.5 billion, their lowest level in more than seven years. The tough currency restrictions that began in 2011 have backfired by pushing many Argentines to the black market in search for dollars, and in turn, stoking inflation, which is estimated at around 30 percent.

After Friday's announcement, the black market dollar weakened to 11.8 from 13 pesos, while the official rate held roughly stable at an average 8 pesos to the dollar. □

EU officials impatient over Greek bailout talks

JUERGEN BAETZ
Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — Top European officials voiced impatience about stalled negotiations between Greece and its bailout creditors Monday, saying the government in Athens must step up its efforts to meet agreed-upon reform and privatization targets. Greece must reach an agreement with its international bailout creditors to get the next installment of its 240 billion euro (\$328-billion) emergency loan package in order to avoid default in May, when it has to pay back bonds worth about 10 billion euros.

The negotiations between Greece and the so-called troika of creditors — the International Monetary Fund, the European Cen-

tral Bank and the European Commission — are months behind schedule amid disagreements over cost-cutting measures and reforms.

"We call on Greece and the troika to do the utmost to conclude the negotiations," said Dutch Finance Minister Jeroen Dijsselbloem. There is "far too little" progress, he insisted. The Eurogroup of finance ministers, which Dijsselbloem chairs, won't approve paying out the next bailout loans unless there is a final agreement with the troika, he warned.

Dijsselbloem spoke after a meeting in Brussels where the creditors briefed the officials on the outstanding issues with Greece, including what he called a fiscal gap in this year's budget

and a lack of implementation of structural reforms.

"Progress is being made, but we're not yet there," said the EU's top economic official, Commissioner Olli Rehn.

For the past four years, Greece has been relying on emergency loans after years of fiscal mismanagement left it with a mountain of debt and a gaping budget deficit. In return, successive governments have had to slash salaries and pensions, raise taxes and sell off assets to reduce debt and make the economy competitive.

However, Greece is still struggling to emerge from a six-year-old recession that saw its gross domestic product fall by almost a quarter. Unemployment has risen steadily and

stands at about 27 percent.

As they headed into the meeting in Brussels, ministers from other eurozone nations suggested their patience is wearing thin as the latest negotiations with Greece keep dragging on.

"Greece must continue its successful trajectory, but further efforts are needed," said German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble. "Greece must stay its reform course."

Autria's Michael Spindelegger also acknowledged that Greece had made significant progress, but added that eurozone finance ministers are "indeed concerned regarding far-reaching reforms and the privatization program." □



European Commissioner for Economic Affairs Olli Rehn, left, speaks with Greek Finance Minister Yannis Stournaras during a meeting of eurogroup finance ministers at the European Council building in Brussels on Monday, Jan. 27, 2014. Eurozone finance ministers on Monday were to discuss Greece's economic issues and the frustrating pace of negotiations. (AP Photo/Virginia Mayo)

French joblessness up despite Hollande's pledge

PARIS (AP) — Embattled French president François Hollande's pledge to "reverse the curve" of unemployment last year has come back to haunt him as figures released Monday showed a further increase in the ranks of

France's jobless.

Conservative opposition figures lept on the new report from the national employment office that showed the number of job seekers rose 0.3 percent in December to 3.3 million. Hollande, whose

popularity remains near record lows, made reversing the unemployment trend one of his key aims last year.

UMP party leader Jean-François Cope called for the dismissal of labor minister and Hollande confi-

dante Michel Sapin. Prime Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault claimed the figures showed a "stabilization" in unemployment, but said that "we must go further and faster" against joblessness, which stands at 11.1 percent. □

LOCAL Aruba TODAY

Marriott Front Desk Agent Alfonso receives Spirit to Serve award



PALM BEACH - Marriott's Aruba Front Desk Agent Alfonso Rey-Canal was pleasantly surprised when Hotel Manager Matt Knights called him up to his office last week.

Alfonso was acknowledged by Marriott's Chairman and CEO Bill Marriott and received the "Spirit to Serve" Award for his impeccable service.

Alfonso has been working at the Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino only six months and already received great comments from guests. It was a specific guest that took the time to send a letter to Marriott's Chairman and CEO Bill

Marriott to recognize the exceptional service Alfonso had given him during his last Aruba vacation. "The Aruba Marriott associates and in particular Alfonso is what keeps me selecting Marriott as my hotels of first choice", said Mr. Feldman in his letter.

The Spirit to Serve Award recognizes those associates who are acknowledged by a Marriott guest for outstanding service. Alfonso received his personalized signed certificate by Chairman and CEO Bill Marriott and President and Chief Executive Officer Arne Sorenson. Well done and 'pabien' to Alfonso! □



William Blazinski honored by ATA

EAGLE BEACH - Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a very special gentleman, who is a loyal and friendly Visitor of Aruba, at the Aruba Beach Club, as Ambassadors of Goodwill. The symbolic honorary title is presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 20-or-more consecutive years.

The honoree was Mr. William Blazinski from Avon, Connecticut. William is a loyal member of the Aruba Beach Club and he loves Aruba very much because of the friendly people, safety, the weather, beaches, restaurants, great entertainment and being on Aruba and staying at the ABC is like being home for him. The event which included snacks and drinks, was a surprise organized by William's wife Mrs. Winnie Blazinski, who invited a big group of friends staying at the ABC to witness the honoring ceremony. The

certificates were presented by Mr. Ernest Giel representing the Aruba Tourism Authority together with Ms. Kenia Brito representing the Aruba Beach Club and a big group of friends from Bill. □



Indian Association of Aruba Celebrates 65th Republic Day of India!

- Visit the Expo this week in UNOCA on the life of Gandhi and other artifacts of India.

ORANJESTAD - This weekend India celebrated 65th Anniversary of its Republic Day. On this occasion, Indian Association of Aruba is organizing, with co operation of UNACO, an exhibition on Indian artifacts and life and philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi. We invite people in Aruba to visit the expo in Unoca from 9am to 5pm all this week until Friday, the 31st of January. Gandhiji was a reformer, freedom fighter and a great visionary from India. He studied bar-at-law in London and started his legal practice in India. In 1893, he was sent by one of his clients to Durban in South Africa to represent him for a few months. During his train journey from Durban to Pretoria, he was thrown out of a first class railway compartment on the wishes of a white passenger even though he had a valid ticket. This historic journey brought him face to face with the

stark realities of British rule and he stayed there for 21 years until all his main demands were met by British colonizers. An American biographer wrote, 'General Smuts did what every other Government that ever opposed Gandhi had to do - he yielded.'

As a child, he was shy and timid but his personal experience of indignities obliged him to tap his hidden moral resources and turned this ordinary person in to 'Mahatma- A Great Soul'. His principles of non-violence & truth gave courage to millions of unarmed people all over the world as they got attention and admiration of the world. The story of this great miracle is also the story of Gandhi's life. His work in South Africa done, Gandhiji listened to the call of his mother land and started a unique freedom struggle with his principles of 'Non-Violence & Truth'. He believed in hating the sin and not the sinner. He called his principles as 'Satyagraha' i.e. holding fast to truth and being firm in a righteous cause. He was thus ready to defy and



Indian Border Security Force soldiers on the backs of camels march during the Republic Day parade in New Delhi, India, Sunday, Jan. 26, 2014. Millions of Indians watched a display of the country's military power and cultural diversity amid tight security during national day celebrations. India adopted its democratic constitution on Jan. 26, 1950.

(AP Photo/Saurabh Das)

willing to suffer. His non-violence was not of a weak person but of a strong person with strict rules for his followers. He harbored no personal ill-will against the perpetrators of crime as he believed that they were misled.

'An eye for an eye will make

the whole world blind'- said Gandhi. He not only made India free from the British rule but also aimed at a complete moral and social regeneration and gave a new moral stature to India. He was a friend of man as a man and above all nations, race or religions. To him, a goal by itself did not justify the means. He insisted on achieving a worthy goal through pure and moral means.' Simple living and high thinking' was his motto and he relied on self help in all his daily chores to economise his cost of living. Gandhi said, 'Civilization does not mean multiplication but a deliberate and voluntary reduction of wants.

The earth provides enough to satisfy everyman's need but not everyone's greed.' He was greatly influenced by the philosophy of non-possession as per Gita- a world famous Hindu scripture.

He had also studied early in his life about other religions like Islam, the new testaments of Christians, Buddhism, Jainism and thus the attitude of respect for all religions and desire to understand best in each one of them were thus planted early in his life.

Gandhiji always practiced what he preached and

until his last day at the age of 79, he used to spin a wheel called 'charkha' to make cotton. This Charkha became a symbol of his principles and teachings. Gandhiji is rightly said to be a saint amongst the politicians and a politician amongst the saints. The moral influence of Gandhi's personality and his gospel of Non Violence & Truth cannot be weighed in any material scale. The value of these principles not limited to any particular time, generation or country but it is his imperishable gift to the humanity. Gandhiji himself has written numerous book and articles on various topics including religion, universal brotherhood, and importance of women, education, economics, ecology, trusteeship and sustainable all-round development. He laid down sound philosophical grounds for the society, its economic growth and the politicians. In the words of Martin Luther King Jr, "The intellectual and moral satisfaction that I fail to gain from anywhere else, I found in the non-violent resistance philosophy of Gandhi.'

Prakash Gupta
President
Indian Association of
Aruba

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Marianela Parra
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A dynamic and constantly evolving Postal World

ORANJESTAD – The phenomenon that the postal sector at world level is changing fast is not new. The customer is getting more and more exigent that products and services are adjusted to his needs. The requirements of the consumer are increasing in accordance with the technological developments. These same necessities then again result in new technological developments. During the past 10 to 15 years this cycle has also become manifest in Aruba. From these dynamics one notices that an important part of the postal activities contributed to a proper development in the commercial area. Consequence thereof is that the postal activities are directly related to technological and economic tendencies on the global market. Substitution of sending corre-

spondence through electronic means, competition on the local logistical market and the influence of the economic and financial crisis all greatly influenced how the postal world works. On international level the postal world has experienced a major impact in the last few years that affected the postal industry in general. Technological innovations such as e-mail, text messages, voice/video via internet among others, for a large part substitute practices such as distribution of personal, commercial and marketing correspondence. The postal industry in general is being affected also by other factors such as consolidation of distribution, a combination of communication with other types of correspondence and a decrease of the frequency of sending mail, the way in which the

mail is being sent and the weight of the mail. Commercial users for example can print in smaller font, double-sided, use thinner paper and as such reduce the volume of sales for the industry. To illustrate the foregoing we followed the developments in both the Netherlands and the United States.

THE NETHERLANDS

Drop in mail volume of 12% in the first 3 quarters of 2013; Financial loss of 403 million Euro up to August of 2013; Two price increases of stamps of 11% and 6,7% in 6 months in 2013;

Mail delivery on 5 days instead of 6;

Elimination of post offices; Dutch Post sold 50% of its shares in TNT after the failed sale to UPS.

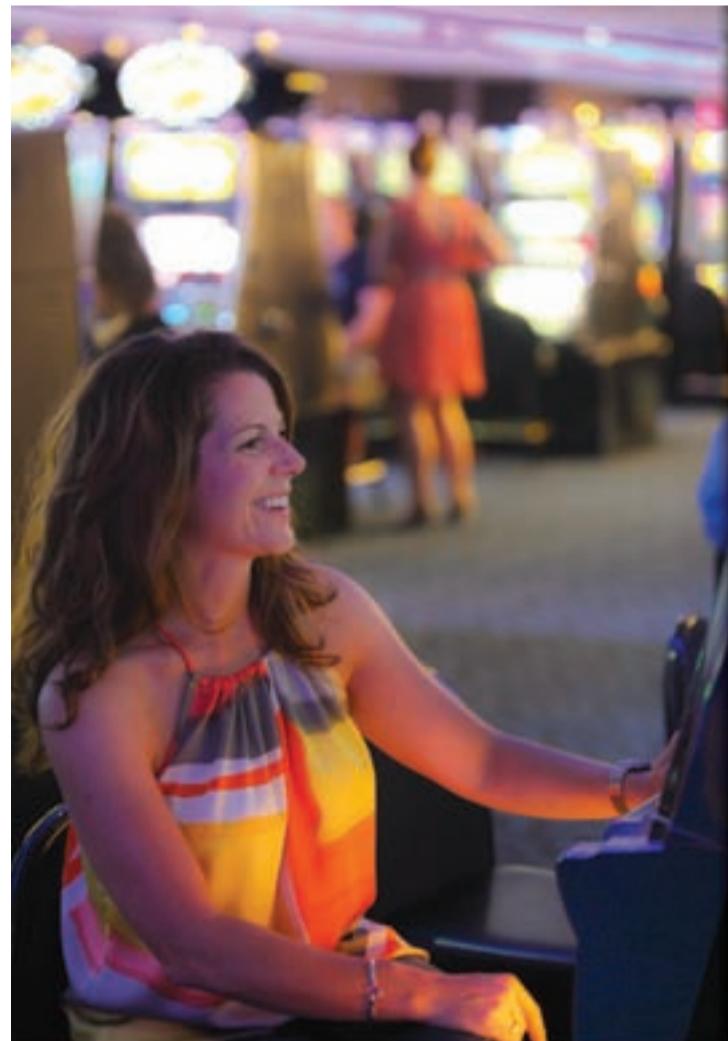
UNITED STATES

Financial loss of US\$ 15.9 billion in 2012;

Mail delivery on 5 days

instead of 6; Proposition in Congress to eliminate house-to-house delivery and instead deliver to community mailboxes; Two price increases of stamps in 2013 of 6,5%; Mail volume decreased with 30% from 213 billion in 2006 to 160 billion in 2012; Another expected decrease of 144 billion or 23% in 2016. The majority of postal services in the world are suffering a loss of volume of sales at a rhythm of more than 5% per year, forcing them to adjust to the new circumstances. For the majority part of postal administrations around the world it is a fact that their main activity and, consequently, their biggest source of income, is the massive load of correspondence of large companies that serve the community, such as for example the massive correspondence of banks, insurance com-

panies, utility services, the government, etc. In several cases this percentage amounts to 80% of the total traffic. The postal industry is one of the largest employers in the world. If one takes into account that globally there are more than 5 million postal employees, this automatically becomes a preoccupation for governments as well. For a postal administration to survive in the current precarious global situation it has to be innovative and at the same time improve its efficiency, quality and level of service. This will have financial and socio-economic consequences for every country. In recent years many countries have further developed and transformed their postal enterprises into logistical enterprises and this seems to be the direction that postal services should take. □



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SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

Manning eyes Super Bowl title with 2nd team

HOWARD FENDRICH
AP Pro Football Writer

For all the NFL records Peyton Manning owns — and there are plenty — he is one victory away from the one accomplishment that eventually might define his legacy more than any other.

If Manning's Denver Broncos beat the Seattle Seahawks next weekend, he would become the first starting quarterback to win Super Bowl titles with two teams.

Manning is already a larger-than-life figure in Indianapolis, of course, widely credited with turning a basketball town into a football town by making the Colts truly matter. He led them to two NFL championship games, winning in 2007, losing in 2010.

And now Manning, at the age of 37, two years removed from sitting out an entire season after a series of neck operations, has a chance to forever stamp himself as a figure of similar importance in Denver, too. As it is, he already has joined Craig Morton and



An extra football crosses in front of Denver Broncos quarterback Peyton Manning as he throws another during NFL football practice at the team's training facility in Englewood, Colo., on Friday, Jan. 24, 2014.

Associated Press

Kurt Warner as the only QBs to lead two clubs to the Super Bowl, although they didn't win with both.

"If he can win this game, he definitely will be an icon in two cities," said Morton, who was in Denver for six of his 18 NFL seasons.

"Well, he probably already is."

But ... there's so much focus on the Super Bowl. If you win, you're in granite. If you lose, you're in the mud."

Spoken from experience. Morton went 0-2 as a Super Bowl starter, losing with the Dallas Cowboys in 1971, then the Broncos in 1978. Warner went 1-2, winning with the St. Louis Rams in 2000, then losing with them in 2002, before losing with the Arizona Cardinals in 2009.

There are similarities. Morton eventually lost his starting job in Dallas, spent some time with bad New York Giants teams, then rebuilt his career in Denver.

Continued on page 22

U.S. to bring record 230 athletes to Sochi Olympics

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — The United States will bring 230 athletes to the Sochi Olympics, the largest delegation ever for any country at the Winter Games.

The previous record was 216 by the U.S. in 2010 in Vancouver.

Todd Lodwick in Nordic combined will become the first American to compete in six Winter Olympics. Lodwick's teammate Billy Demong and skier Bode Miller are headed to their

fifth. Only three U.S. Winter Olympians other than Lodwick had previously accomplished that feat.

The U.S. Olympic Committee said Monday that of the 106 returning Olympians, 49 have won medals — 13 of them gold.

Miller has won five medals and needs three more to tie short-track speedskater Apolo Anton Ohno as the most decorated U.S. Winter Olympian. Snowboarder Shaun White and speedskater Shani Davis could

become the first American men to win gold in the same event in three straight Winter Games.

Two women's bobsled push athletes, hurdler Lolo Jones and sprinter Lauryn Williams, become the ninth and 10th Americans to compete at both the Winter and Summer Olympics. The oldest member of the team is 46-year-old curler Ann Swishelm while the youngest is 15-year-old freestyle skier Maggie Voisin. □



Todd Lodwick competes in the ski jumping portion of the U.S. Olympic nordic combined trials in Park City, Utah, Saturday, Dec. 28, 2013.

Associated Press

Heat too much for Spurs in reprise of finals

The Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — Chris Bosh scored 24 points on 9-for-10 shooting, LeBron James added 18 points and the Miami Heat rolled past the San Antonio Spurs 113-101 on Sunday in an NBA Finals rematch from last season. Mario Chalmers scored 16 points for Miami, which used Dwyane Wade as a reserve for the first time since Jan. 6, 2008. Wade — an All-Star starter again this season — had not played in any of two-time defending champion Miami's most recent four games while dealing with ongoing knee rehabilitation. He had eight points and five assists in 24 minutes.

Michael Beasley scored 12 points, Norris Cole had 11 and Ray Allen added 10 for Miami. Bosh has made 17 of his last 18 shots from the floor.

Tim Duncan led San Antonio with 23 points. Boris Diaw added 15.

WARRIORS 103, TRAIL BLAZERS 88

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — Stephen Curry had 38 points, eight assists and seven rebounds, and Golden State used a smothering defense to beat Portland. The newly elected All-Star starting point guard, wearing shiny gold shoes, shot 13 of 23 from the floor to carry the offensive load. The Warriors did it all on defense, too, building a 22-point lead midway through the fourth quarter to put the game out of reach.

Golden State outshot Portland 41.8 percent to 33.7 percent and forced 15 turnovers while committing nine.

Damian Lillard had 16 points and four assists, and Wesley Matthews scored 21 for the Blazers, who had a quick turnaround after beating Minnesota in Portland on Saturday night. It was a season low in points and shooting percentage and it tied the largest margin of defeat for Portland, which entered averaging an NBA-best 109.5 points.

NETS 85, CELTICS 79

BOSTON (AP) — Andray

Blatche scored 17 points to lead Brooklyn to victory in the first visit by Paul Pierce and Kevin Garnett to Boston since they were traded last July.

The cornerstones of the Celtics' 2008 championship team received video tributes early in the game with career highlights shown on the scoreboard.

They didn't have any highlights on the court until Garnett stole the ball from Rajon Rondo and dribbled ahead of the field for a layup that ended Boston's last threat.

That put the Nets ahead 82-77 with 20 seconds left and secured their 10th win in 11 games.

The Celtics, losing for the 17th time in 20 games, were led by Brandon Bass with 17 points and Rondo with 13 points, eight rebounds and eight assists.

Pierce and Garnett scored just six points each.

KNICKS 110, LAKERS 103

NEW YORK (AP) — Carmelo Anthony followed his 62-point game with 35 more, and New York beat Los Angeles.

Anthony finished with two points fewer than he had at halftime of his record-setting night Friday, but he scored six straight New York points down the stretch after the Lakers had cut the Knicks' lead to two with just over 5 minutes left.

And he had plenty of help as the Knicks won their second straight following a five-game losing streak.

Raymond Felton scored 20 points, Tim Hardaway Jr. had 18 and J.R. Smith 16 for the Knicks. Tyson Chandler had 13 points and 14 rebounds.

Jodie Meeks scored 24 points for the Lakers. Pau Gasol had 20 points and 13 rebounds as the Lakers dropped their fourth straight to finish 2-5 on their Grammy Awards trip.

NUGGETS 125, KINGS 117

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — Ty Lawson scored 27 points, Wilson Chandler had 20 and Denver defeated short-handed Sacramento for its second straight victory.



After fouling San Antonio Spurs' Tim Duncan (21), Miami Heat's LeBron James (6) reacts as he is charged with a technical foul also, during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Miami, Sunday, Jan. 26, 2014. The Heat won 113-101.

Associated Press

The Nuggets went ahead late in the third quarter and never trailed again. Denver was coming off a 109-96 home win Saturday night over Indiana, which has the

best record in the NBA. Isaiah Thomas scored 22 points for the Kings, who have dropped three straight and five of six. They played their second

straight game without leading scorers DeMarcus Cousins (ankle sprain) and Rudy Gay (Achilles strain). The two combine for nearly 43 points per game. □

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Stallings rallies from 3 behind to win at Torrey

DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Scott Stallings moved out of a five-way tie for the lead by shooting a birdie on the final hole on Sunday to win the Farmers Insurance Open.

Stallings hit a 4-iron with his second shot on the par-5 18th, just clearing the water, then took two putts from 40 feet for birdie and a 4-under 68 at Torrey Pines. He made six birdies over his last 11 holes, along with a pair of bogeys.

Most remarkable is that he managed to hit only four fairways in the final round. But one that he did was important; the 537-yard closing hole.

That was enough for a 9-under 279 and a one-shot victory when no one

could catch him.

It was the third career PGA Tour victory for Stallings, who earned a return trip to the Masters and should move high enough in the world ranking to qualify for the Match Play Championship next month in Arizona. K.J. Choi had the best score of the week on the South Course with a 66 and was among those who tied for second. The pins were set up in favorable positions for birdies, making the course play the easiest it had all week.

But that was not quite easy enough for Gary Woodland, Jordan Spieth, Pat Perez and so many others who squandered a good chance to win.

Woodland appeared to have the best chance to catch Stallings. He was one

shot behind — with plenty of length to reach the 18th in two — but hooked his drive badly at No. 17, and feeling he needed to make his 45-foot par putt to have any chance of winning, he ended up going for too much and three-putted for double bogey. Woodland, who had a one-shot lead going into the final round, then missed an easy birdie attempt on the 18th and closed with a 74.

"This will be hard to swallow," Woodland said. "I felt like I kind of gave one away today."

Marc Leishman of Australia had the last chance to force a playoff, but his drive on the 18th went well right and bounced off the cart path and a fan. He had no shot at the green in two, and his wedge for an



Scott Stallings holds the trophy after winning the Farmers Insurance Open golf tournament Sunday, Jan. 26, 2014, in San Diego.

Associated Press

eagle stopped a few feet to the side of the hole. His tap-in birdie gave him a 71 and a share of second.

Jason Day (68) and Graham DeLaet of Canada (68) each made birdie on the last hole to tie for second. So did Perez, the San

Diego native who grew up at Torrey Pines and whose father is the longtime announcer on the first tee at the Farmers Insurance Open. Perez missed a 10-foot birdie chance on the 17th and closed with a 70. □

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Rangers rally by Devils in snowy Bronx

The Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — After sun reflecting off the ice delayed the first hockey game at Yankee Stadium, the New York Rangers and pinstriped goalie Henrik Lundqvist beat the New Jersey Devils 7-3 in snow and cold Sunday.

Rick Nash scored for the fifth straight game, and the Rangers used a four-goal second period against Martin Brodeur to take the lead for good. After Dominic Moore and Marc Staal had goals in the first for the Rangers, Mats Zuccarello scored two straight to put New York ahead for the first time. Carl Hagelin and Nash found the net, too.

Lundqvist, who sported stylish pinstriped pads for the occasion, stumbled through a difficult first but settled down and made 19 saves. Jaromir Jagr had two assists to excite the large number of New Jersey fans who made the trek to the Bronx for what was nominally a Devils home game.

PANTHERS 5, RED WINGS 4, SO

DETROIT (AP) — Nick Bjugstad scored in a shootout and Tim Thomas denied

Detroit three times, lifting the Panthers to a win over the Red Wings after trailing by two goals twice in regulation.

Brad Boyes scored a game-tying, short-handed goal with 3:46 left in the third period a couple minutes after teammate Drew Shore scored.

Detroit's Gustav Nyquist and Daniel Alfredsson scored 1:19 apart midway through the second and Riley Sheahan had a goal late in the second period. Jonas Gustavsson, filling in for the injured Jimmy Howard, had 33 saves in his third straight start for the Red Wings.

Thomas stopped 26 shots.

JETS 3, BLACKHAWKS 1
CHICAGO (AP) — Al Montoya made 34 saves, Andrew Ladd scored his 150th goal and the Jets rallied to beat the slumping Blackhawks.

Blake Wheeler had two third-period goals as Winnipeg won for the second straight day and improved to 6-1 under new coach Paul Maurice.

Brandon Bollig scored in the first for the Blackhawks, and Corey Crawford had 18 saves. Montoya



New York Rangers left wing Carl Hagelin (62) celebrates with Rangers defenseman Marc Staal (18) after scoring a goal in the second period of an NHL outdoor hockey game in the snow with New Jersey Devils at Yankee Stadium in New York, Sunday, Jan. 26, 2014. It is the first time a hockey game has been played in Yankee Stadium.

Associated Press

was terrific while subbing for Ondrej Pavelec, who had started the last eight games for Winnipeg. The Chicago native shut down the Blackhawks after an early gaffe put the Jets into a 1-0 hole.

CANUCKS 5, COYOTES 4, OT

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP) — Kevin Bieksa scored his second goal of

the game at 2:15 of overtime, lifting the Canucks to a victory over the Coyotes. Zac Dalpe and Chris Higgins each had goal and an assist for Vancouver, and Jannik Hansen also scored. Bieksa also had an assist and Roberto Luongo, shaky at times, made 29 saves for the Canucks.

On the winner, Bieksa chipped his fourth goal of

the season over Phoenix goalie Mike Smith just as a Coyotes power play expired. Antoine Vermette had a hat trick for Phoenix, and Shane Doan added a goal and an assist. Smith finished with 20 saves.

OILERS 5, PREDATORS 1

EDMONTON, Alberta (AP) — Ryan Smyth had a goal and an assist, and the Oilers snapped a season-high six-game losing streak with a victory over the Predators. Justin Schultz, Jordan Eberle and Ryan Nugent Hopkins each had a goal and an assist and Nail Yakupov also scored for the Oilers (16-32-7), who won for the fifth time in 22 games. Edmonton has had five losing streaks of at least five games this season.

David Legwand scored for the Predators (23-23-8), who have lost two in a row. Smyth scored his 125th power-play goal as an Oiler, tying him for second on the team's all-time list with Wayne Gretzky and putting him one back of leader Glenn Anderson. □



Bolshoy Ice Dome, where ice hockey will be played, is shown at the 2014 Winter Olympics Saturday, Jan. 25, 2014, in Sochi, Russia. The Olympics begin Feb. 7th.

Associated Press

NHL won't commit to Olympics beyond Sochi Games

LARRY LAGE
AP Hockey Writer

The NHL has not decided whether to let its players participate in the Olympics beyond the Sochi Games, making it possible they will not be on the ice in South Korea in 2018. Sweden's Daniel Alfredsson has competed in each of the last four Olympics with players

from the league. He is looking forward to doing it for a fifth and probably final time next month. The 41-year-old forward says it would be "bad" for the NHL to take the unique experience away from its players.

League officials, though, are not sure freezing their league for two-plus weeks in the middle of

the season is good for the Olympics are not in North America. □

Football betting more popular than ever in Vegas

HANNAH DREIER
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — With the Super Bowl approaching, fans are talking trash, buying snacks, and, more than ever, placing bets. Fans bet an unprecedented \$99 million on the Super Bowl last year, and the Nevada gambling industry expects to break the record again Sunday, barring a snowstorm. Nevada sports books collected record amounts of football wagers during the tail end of 2013. All of this is changing the role of the humble sports book, which casinos used to see as a low-profit perk that kept customers from going next door.

"It's not just an amenity anymore; it's not just icing on the cake, it's part of the meal," said Jay Kornegay, who runs the LVH sports book. "We've seen crowds like we've never seen before."

Professional gamblers and odds makers alike attribute the rise in wagering to the increase in televised games, and the increasing

ubiquity of sports analysis. Amateur gamblers are more likely to bet on a game they can watch, because the emotional journey is part of the fun.

The proliferation of sports podcasts, blogs and websites, as well as the debates that rage on social media, have all made fans feel more educated and confident in their opinions, according to Kornegay, who spent last week furiously working with four staffers to figure out hyper-specific data points like the number of receptions Denver running back Knowshon Moreno is likely to have.

Proposition wagers, in which gamblers bet on elements of the game aside from the final score, account for as much as 60 percent of Super Bowl bets in Nevada.

Johnny Avello, who runs the luxurious sports book at Wynn, where the chairs are made of fine leather and the carpet is thick enough to pass out on, believes the stigma is also falling away from the pastime.

Avello, who speaks with a Goodfellas-type Brooklyn accent even though he grew up in upstate New York, says this is the biggest change he's seen in the past decades.

"Even Al Michaels on (Sunday) Night Football will say, 'Wow, they covered the spread,'" he said, grinning in disbelief.

When casinos figure out how to attract fantasy sports players to the Strip, profits may soar even farther.

Some of this growth was hidden by the recession. People scale back on gambling before other discretionary spending, and the handle — the total amount of money wagered — plummeted in 2009. It was the only fiscal year of the past ten that saw a decline in sports betting.

Oddsmakers believe the previous Super Bowl record, set in 2006, would have been upended years before 2013 if not for the hard times.

Last fall, gamblers set records in September, Octo-

ber and November. In November, the last month for which statistics have been released, sports books handled \$490 million in wagers. On Sunday, the Super Bowl will be played outdoors at a site with cold weather for the first time, and the industry is worried that snow could throw off the handle when the Seahawks meet the Broncos, favored to win by 2.5 points, in New Jersey. Casual gamblers might be spooked, unable to predict how the weather would affect their favored team.

The surge in betting means that sports books are now expected to contribute to the bottom line.

So while casinos are throwing elaborate parties for Super Bowl weekend, selling table service and luxurious suites, don't expect to get so much as a free bottle of water at the sports book. At Wynn, a customer has to bet \$150 before the book will think about giving out a drink ticket.

Books remain less profitable per square foot than table games, where the house

always wins. An oddsmaker's goal is to neither win nor lose on the games, but to get equal money coming in on both sides — and clean up in commissions.

This commission, also known as the vigorish or juice, amounts to about 4.5 percent of the handle at most Strip sports books.

Don't start wringing your hands for the sports books, though. They've only lost twice on the Super Bowl in the past 20 years.

And they have another advantage. While betting is becoming more popular, the physical books are becoming smaller. That's in large part because of the demise of one sport in particular: horse racing.

In days past, racing aficionados would hang around the books and watch contests from morning till night, with new ones starting every four minutes.

For the past decade, football has represented nearly half of the sports book handle, with most gamblers buying their tickets well ahead of the games. □

Manning

Continued from page 18

Warner eventually lost his starting job in St. Louis, spent some time with the Giants (before being replaced by Manning's younger brother, Eli), then rebuilt his career in Arizona.

"Everybody thought I was done. They thought I couldn't play anymore. So to get back to that level and go back to the Super Bowl is a great accomplishment," said Warner, who works for the NFL Network. "It's cool to have Peyton there, after there were all the questions about his health. Similar to me, he was let go and sent off to greener pastures. He's such a special player anyway, but here's an opportunity to put some icing on that cake and separate himself from all the other great quarterbacks."

The older Manning was let go by the Colts after missing all of 2011, then wooed

by champion-QB-turned-executive John Elway to Denver, where No. 18 quickly resumed his year-in, year-out excellence. Manning's offense set a passel of league records this season, including his individual passing standards of 55 touchdowns and 5,477 yards, which is why he's expected to land a fifth NFL MVP award, adding to yet another mark he already holds.

And while Manning is not the sort to wax on about his standing in the game or his status in Denver, he did reflect a bit on the journey he's been on.

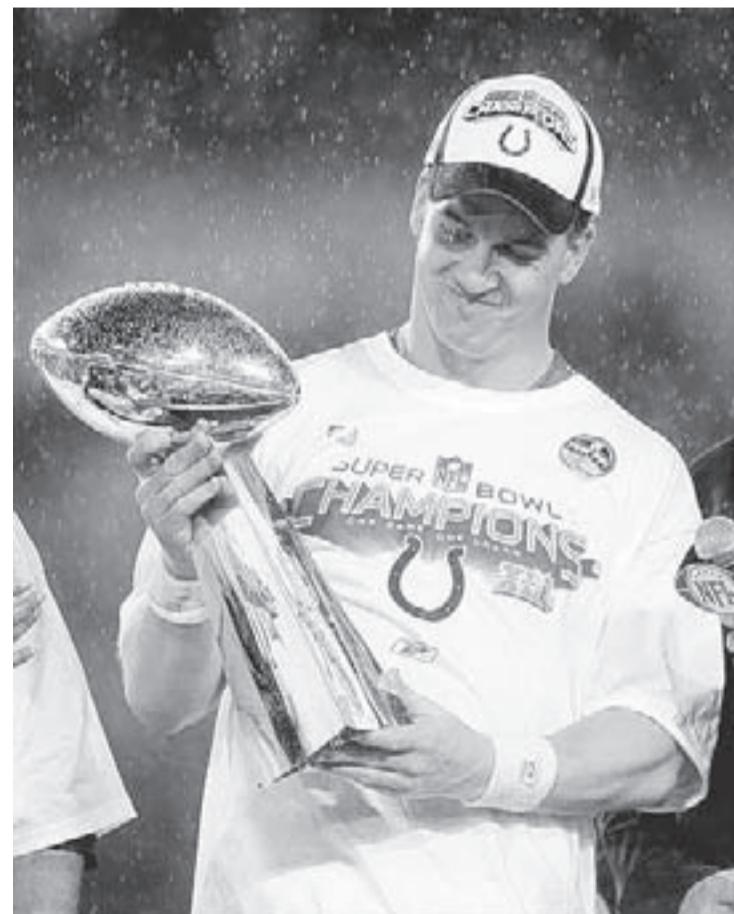
"I had never switched teams before. I had no idea how long it would take to form some chemistry offensively, to get comfortable with the culture," said Manning, who threw for 400 yards in the AFC championship game victory over the New England Patriots.

"I talked to some other players that had changed

teams, and I think it depends on the individual, how you mesh with your new teammates, how comfortable you are in your new surroundings," he said. It's rare for a player at any position to transition well enough from one team to another to help both win a championship. Manning, the only member of the active rosters of the Broncos or Seahawks who's won a Super Bowl previously, can become only the 15th starting player to win titles with two teams, according to STATS.

"It's a real challenge to go to a different location, different group of guys. A completely new adjustment," said Bart Oates, a center on championship clubs with the New York Giants in 1987 and 1991, and the San Francisco 49ers in 1994.

"People will remember Peyton in Denver, no matter what. But if you bring them a championship, they'll love Peyton. □



In this Feb. 4, 2007, file photo, Indianapolis Colts quarterback Peyton Manning (18) admires the Vince Lombardi Trophy after the Colts beat the Chicago Bears 29-17 in NFL football's Super Bowl XLI at Dolphin Stadium in Miami. When he faces the Seattle Seahawks next Sunday, Manning can become the first starting quarterback to win the Super Bowl with two franchises.

Associated Press

Report: Spies use smartphone apps to track people

RAPHAEL SATTER
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Documents leaked by former NSA contractor Edward Snowden suggest that spy agencies have a powerful ally in Angry Birds and a host of other apps installed on smartphones across the globe.

The documents, published Monday by The New York Times, the Guardian, and ProPublica, suggest that the mapping, gaming, and social networking apps which are a common feature of the world's estimated 1 billion smartphones can feed America's National Security Agency and Britain's GCHQ with huge amounts of personal data, including location information and details such as political affiliation or sexual orientation.

The size and scope of the program aren't publicly known, but the reports suggest that U.S. and British intelligence easily get routine access to data generated by apps such as the Angry Birds game franchise or the Google Maps navigation service.

The joint spying program "effectively means that anyone using Google Maps on a smartphone is working in support of a GCHQ system," one 2008 document from the British eavesdropping agency is quoted as saying. Another document — a hand-drawn picture of a smirking fairy conjuring up a tottering pile of papers over

a table marked "LEAVE TRAFFIC HERE" — suggests that gathering the data doesn't take much effort. The NSA did not directly comment on the reports but said in a statement Monday that the communications of those who were not "valid foreign intelligence targets" were not of interest to the spy agency.

"Any implication that NSA's foreign intelligence collection is focused on the smartphone or social media communications of everyday Americans is not true," the statement said. "We collect only those communications that we are authorized by law to collect for valid foreign intelligence and counterintelligence purposes — regardless of the technical means used by the targets."

GCHQ said it did not comment on intelligence matters, but insisted that all of its activity was "authorized, necessary and proportionate."

Intelligence agencies' interest in mobile phones and the networks they run on has been documented in several of Snowden's previous disclosures, but the focus on apps shows how everyday, innocuous-looking pieces of software can be turned into instruments of espionage.

Angry Birds, an addictive birds-versus-pigs game which has been downloaded more than 1.7 billion times worldwide, was

one of the most eye-catching examples. The Times and ProPublica said a 2012 British intelligence report laid out how to extract Angry Bird users' information from phones running the Android operating system. Another document, a 14-page-long NSA slideshow published to the Web, listed a host of other mobile apps, including those made by social networking giant Facebook, photo sharing site Flickr, and the film-oriented Flixster.

It wasn't clear precisely what information can be extracted from which apps, but one of the slides gave the example of a user who uploaded a photo using a social media app. Under the words, "Golden Nugget!" it said that the data generated by the app could be examined to determine a phone's settings, where it connected to, which websites it had



In this image made from video released by WikiLeaks on Friday, Oct. 11, 2013, former National Security Agency systems analyst Edward Snowden speaks during a presentation ceremony for the Sam Adams Award in Moscow, Russia.

Associated Press

visited, which documents it had downloaded, and who its users' friends were. One of the documents said that apps could even be mined for information about users' political align-

ment or sexual orientation. Google Inc. and Rovio Entertainment Ltd., the maker of Angry Birds, did not immediately return messages seeking comment on the reports. □



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STREET BRIEFS

Liberty Global buying Dutch cable co. Ziggo

AMSTERDAM (AP) — Liberty Global PLC, the cable company chaired by American tycoon John Malone, says it will buy the 71.5 percent of Dutch cable provider Ziggo NV it doesn't already own for around 10 billion euros (\$13.7 billion) in stock and cash. Liberty owns the other major Dutch cable provider, UPC, and plans to merge into a dominant cable company that would cover 90 percent of Dutch households. The management-supported deal announced Monday must be approved by regulators. UPC and Ziggo argue competition also comes from mobile Internet and providers of ADSL, or high-speed Internet access. Liberty's offer represents around 34.53 euros per Ziggo share. That's not far above the 33.25 that they closed at Friday, but represents a 22 percent premium to their closing price on Oct. 15, the day before the companies announced they were in takeover talks.

AT&T says has no Vodafone purchase plan

DALLAS (AP) — AT&T says it does not intend to make an offer soon for British cell-phone company Vodafone. The announcement by the largest U.S. telecommunications company means it is restricted from initiating a bid on Vodafone in the next six months, according to British takeover rules. But the Dallas company can respond to an offer initiated by Vodafone, or it can make a bid in response to an offer from another company.

AT&T Inc. says it made the announcement at the request of a United Kingdom Takeover Panel, and it cites recent speculation about a possible Vodafone deal. Last year, Vodafone agreed to sell its 45 percent stake in AT&T competitor Verizon Communications Inc. to Verizon for \$130 billion. □

Week opens with more global stock declines**BERNARD CONDON****PAUL WISEMAN****AP Business Writers**

NEW YORK (AP) — Shaky economies and plunging currencies in the developing world are fueling a global sell-off in stocks. Fearful investors on Monday pushed prices lower across Asia and Europe, though many of the drops weren't as steep as last

cent, to 15,837.88. The Standard & Poor's 500 index fell 8.73 points, or 0.5 percent, to 1,781.56. The tech-heavy Nasdaq was down the most, falling 44.56 points, or 1.1 percent, to 4,083.61. The selling started in Asia, with major indexes in both Hong Kong and Tokyo down more than 2 percent, then spread to Europe and the U.S., as

losses were modest.

"We have an accelerating economy, low inflation and accommodative monetary policy," he said. "The world isn't falling apart." The market turbulence was set off last week by a report from China on a downturn in its manufacturing, more evidence that the world's second-largest economy is slowing. That's

scale back its stimulus for the U.S. economy, which has helped keep interest rates low. Money that had flooded emerging markets looking for higher returns outside the U.S. has begun to come back now that rates may rise, battering those markets.

Despite the widespread stock selling Monday, experts say the troubles in China and elsewhere in the developing world are unlikely to derail a global economic recovery that appears to be gaining momentum. Growth in the world's wealthy economies is expected to pick up the slack.

"This year, growth will be driven by the dull and old economies — the U.S., the U.K., Germany and even Japan," said Nariman Behravesh, chief economist at IHS Global Insight.

The International Monetary Fund expects the global economy to grow 3.7 percent this year, up from 3 percent in 2013, carried along by faster growth in the United States and the 17 countries that use the euro. The IMF expects the China's growth to decelerate from 7.7 percent last year to 7.5 percent in 2014. "A lot of growth is shifting back to the developed world," said Jennifer Lee, senior economist at BMO Capital Markets. □



A specialist on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange checks a screen, Monday, Jan. 27, 2014. Shaky economies and plunging currencies in the developing world are fueling a global sell-off in stocks. (AP Photo/Richard Drew)

week. In the U.S. and in other rich countries, where economies are healthier, investors also retreated, but the selling was not as fierce. The Dow Jones industrial average slipped 41.23 points, or 0.26 per-

stocks slipped across the board, though much less than feared given the big declines on Friday.

Jack Ablin, chief investment officer at BMO Private Bank, said he was encouraged that the U.S.

a big problem for Brazil, South Africa and other developing countries that have come to depend on exports to that country. Adding to the troubles: The decision by the U.S. Federal Reserve last month to

Royal Caribbean profit climbs as industry rebounds**SCOTT MAYEROWITZ****AP Business Writer**

NEW YORK (AP) — Royal Caribbean signaled a rebound in the cruise industry Monday by posting a fourth-quarter profit of \$7 million, compared to a loss during the same quarter last year of \$393 million. The company attributed the improvement to stronger sales onboard its ships and demand for last-minutes bookings in Europe and Asia.

Net income totaled 3 cents a share, compared with last year's loss of \$1.80. Excluding restructuring charges, net income totaled 23 cents a share, beating the estimate of 18 cents from Wall Street analysts surveyed by FactSet. "Six months ago we said we

thought we had reached an inflection point and these figures clearly bear that out," CEO Richard D. Fain said in a statement. "It has been a challenging year, but the fact that we have achieved our guidance from a year ago nicely demonstrates the strength of our business." The outlook for 2014, Fain said, "is looking highly promising." Royal Caribbean expects its adjusted earnings per share to be \$3.20 to \$3.40 per share this year, up from \$2.40 last year and \$1.97 in 2012. Analysts are forecasting an adjusted profit of \$3.21.

Revenue at the Miami-based company rose 2.7 percent to \$1.85 billion. Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. is the world's second

largest cruise operator with 41 ships. Its brands include namesake Royal Caribbean, Celebrity Cruises and Azamara Club Cruises. Six additional ships are planned.

The biggest growth in revenue for Royal Caribbean came from the sale of onboard extras. Ticket revenue only climbed 1 percent during the quarter but onboard sales and other revenues jumped 6 percent. Overall operating expenses rose 2 percent.

The company recorded restructuring and related charges of \$56.9 million for the full year, including \$43 million in the fourth quarter related to the pending sale of its Pullmantur cruise line's non-core businesses:

a land tour company and a Spanish travel agency. The number of passengers carried on all the brands climbed 4 percent and the overall number of passenger cruise days — an industry measurement of days spent on board multiplied by overall passengers — rose 1.5 percent. That shows that while the cruise line carried more passengers, they cruised for slightly shorter periods. The company's stock rose \$1.17, or 2.5 percent, to \$48.30 in early trading. Investors apparently shrugged off Sunday's early cancellation of a 10-day Caribbean cruise after hundreds of passengers and crew members were sickened with a gastrointestinal illness. □

After loss, LG Electronics sees lower profit, currency risks

YOUNKYUNG LEE

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)

— LG Electronics Inc. is forecasting lower earnings from its mobile business this quarter and risks from swings in Latin American currencies after posting an unexpected loss in the final three months of 2013.

The latest results from LG Electronics, the world's second-largest TV maker and a major device supplier, underline how it is being squeezed between Japanese competitors and its bigger South Korean rival Samsung Electronics Co. LG is battling Japanese manufacturers such as Sony and Panasonic that are expanding market share in televisions, helped

by the weak yen. The company is struggling to make money from the smartphone market where Samsung and Apple Inc. have grabbed the lion share of the profits.

LG Electronics suffered a loss in the final quarter of 2013 because of the stronger South Korean currency while higher marketing costs and falling smartphone prices continued to batter its mobile business. The South Korean tech company said Monday its net loss for October-December was 63.4 billion won (\$58.5 million). That's far smaller than a 478.2 billion won loss a year earlier. But analysts polled by FactSet expected net income of 147.8 billion won.

Sales for the fourth-quarter inched up 1 percent from a year earlier to 14.9 trillion won.

The maker of G flex smartphone said the quarterly loss, the first in four quarters, was mainly due to foreign exchange movements. The company blamed the strong local currency against the U.S. dollar and the Japanese yen as well as fluctuations in currency rates that usually mean higher costs. LG manufactures most of its home appliance products in South Korea and ships overseas. Chief Financial Officer Jung Do-hyun said unstable currency movements in Latin America and other emerging markets would remain a big risk. About 20 percent

of LG's mobile phone sales came from Brazil and other South American countries last year. Argentina's peso lost 16 percent over two days last week.

Among LG's consumer electronics businesses, mobile was the only division that lost money during the fourth quarter.

Profit at LG's flagship TV business surged to 174.3 billion won from a mere 800 million won a year earlier. That was thanks to improved sales of LCD TVs in developed countries and efficient marketing spending to promote high-tier televisions, LG said.

But LG's mobile communications business lost 43.4 billion won, staying in red for a second quarter, de-

spite higher sales from increased smartphone shipments. Shipments of its flagship G2 and other smartphones reached 13 million units in the quarter, a record high for the company. LG attributed the mobile division's loss to increased spending on marketing and declining smartphone prices, an issue that nags other mobile phone vendors as growth in smartphone sales slows in developed countries. □



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This photo shows a parking lot at Caterpillar Belgium, in Gosselies, Belgium. Caterpillar Inc. reported upbeat quarterly financial results on Monday, Jan. 27, 2014. (AP Photo/Yves Logge)

increase Monday helped limit losses in the benchmark index. The Dow can use the assist — it plunged nearly 500 points over Thursday and Friday. It was down 70 points, or 0.4 percent, at 15,809 in afternoon trading.

Caterpillar shares rose \$3.42 to \$89.59. The stock gained just 1.3 percent last year, compared with a 27 percent increase in the Dow.

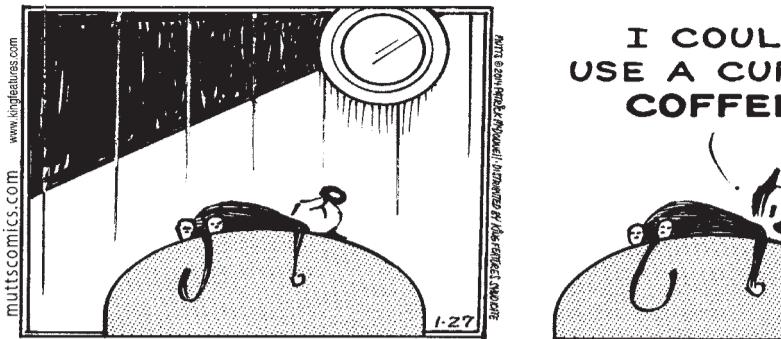
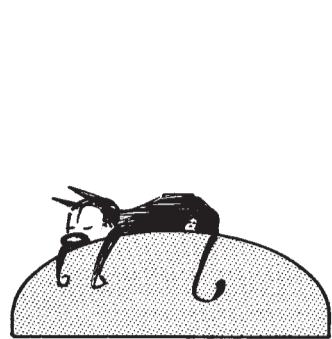
slightly more than 7.5 percent — about the same as this year. That should boost sales of excavators and other machinery, the company said.

Overall, for the three months ended Dec. 31, Caterpillar Inc. earned \$1 billion, or \$1.54 per share. That compares with \$697 million, or \$1.04 per share, a year earlier. The result topped analysts' forecast for a profit of \$1.27, based

net income dropped to \$3.79 billion, or \$5.75 per share, from \$5.68 billion, or \$8.48 per share, in the previous year. Annual revenue fell 16 percent to \$55.66 billion from \$65.88 billion.

For 2014, the company anticipates adjusted earnings of \$5.85 per share on revenue of about \$56 billion. Analysts predict earnings of \$5.75 per share on revenue of \$55.36 billion, on average. □

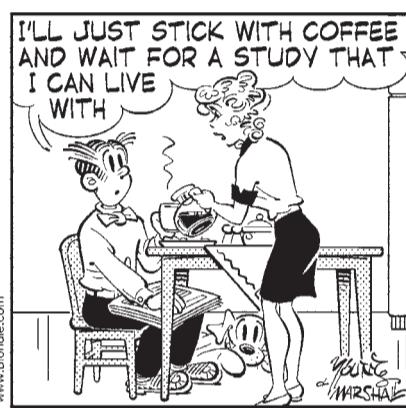
Mutts



6 Chix



Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

1		4			2	
8	4			1		5
5		1	2		4	
9		1	4	5		
7	2	5	8	9		
5		9	6		3	
7		5	8		9	
4	2			8	5	
3			9			1

Difficulty Level ★

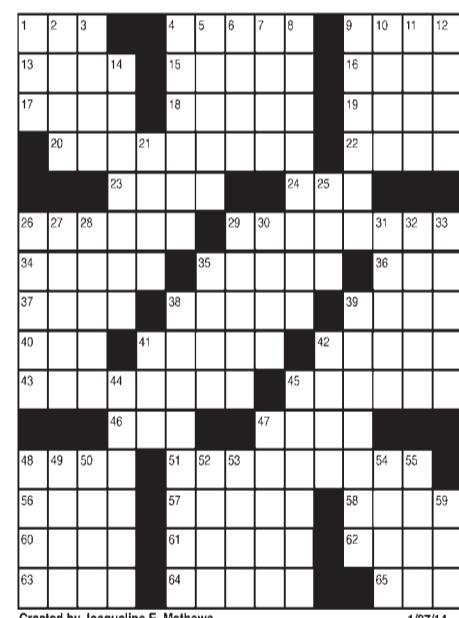
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1/27

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

4	6	3	7	8	2	9	1	5
5	7	9	3	4	1	8	6	2
1	8	2	9	6	5	7	3	4
7	3	4	1	2	9	6	5	8
8	2	1	6	5	3	4	7	9
6	9	5	8	7	4	3	2	1
2	5	7	4	3	8	1	9	6
9	4	6	2	1	7	5	8	3
3	1	8	5	9	6	2	4	7

Saturday's puzzle answer



ACROSS

1 Floor cleaning implement
4 Furious
9 __ Louie; "King of Salads"
13 Fills with wonder
15 Three and four
16 Hearty
17 Ring out
18 Train track pieces
19 Weapons
20 "Beat it!"
22 Robin's home
23 Facial features
24 Brit's raincoat
26 Driveway surface
29 Duke or baron
34 Gave a job to
35 Soup server's spoon
36 Twenty-__; blackjack
37 Eras
38 Tea variety
39 Gigantic
40 Prefix for fat or sense
41 Classic name for a dog
42 Yearned
43 Spider or tick
45 Measly
46 Steiger or Stewart
47 Work hard
48 Actress Delany
51 Humiliate
56 __ up; spent
57 Perch
58 Bug-killing spray
60 Pickle variety
61 Fill with joy
62 Christmas
63 On __; offered at a lower price
64 Talk out of doing
65 Depressed; sad

Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

1/27/14

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

M	A	M	THE	SE	O	M	I	T
E	V	I	L	Y	E	A	R	N
M	O	L	E	R	I	S	D	E
O	W	L	V	A	L	E	R	E
W	A	E	N	V	S	W	A	R
E	R	N	E	S	T	K	I	S
R	E	N	E	S	T	K	I	S
D	E	N	S	P	R	I	D	V
E	N	S	P	R	I	D	V	A
M	U	S	O	A	P	L	I	A
S	M	E	L	L	Y	R	F	U
S	M	E	L	L	Y	R	F	U
V	I	E	H	A	I	F	A	
S	C	R	A	M	P	E	G	
H	E	A	D	S	T	R	O	
E	R	A	S	T	R	O	N	
W	E	D	E	U	N	C	H	
W	E	D	E	U	N	C	H	

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1/27/14

3 Mountaintop
4 Haifa's nation
5 __ up on; studies
6 Eager
7 "To __ the Truth" of old TV
8 Musical group
9 By __; accidentally
10 Seldom seen
11 Charitable gift
12 Finest
14 Coat parts
21 Recolored
25 Tavern order
26 African nation
27 Severity; harshness
28 Sports building
29 __ as a jaybird
30 Reason to bathe
31 Everest or McKinley
32 Wrath
33 Impoverished
35 One of the 12 sons of Jacob

38 Mulled over
39 Ms. Clinton
41 Greek letter
42 Twosome
44 Baby's bed
45 Redcap
47 Single forkful
48 Failures
49 Huge continent

50 Actress Carter
52 Burrowing animal
53 Canoe or tug
54 Paul, before his conversion
55 Grain tower
56 Morning grass blade moisture

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 3X2 Br Garden view \$15K
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 1Br Platinum O.V. \$11,5K
 2Br Platinum O.F. \$29K
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 2 bedroom first floor unit 1566 weeks 5 & 6 fri-fri
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FIRE DEPT.	582-1108
POLIS TIPLINE	11141
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PROF. TAXI	588-0035
TAXI D.T.S.	587-2300
SERVICE ARUBA	583-3232

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Astronauts repeat spacewalk, with mixed success

MARCI DUNN

AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida

(AP) — Two Russian space station astronauts took a spacewalk Monday to complete a camera job left undone last month, but ran into new trouble.

Oleg Kotov and Sergey Ryazanskiy successfully installed one of two commercially provided cameras for Earth observations, a task requiring multiple power connections outside the International Space Station. Everything checked out well with this high-definition camera, unlike the post-Christmas spacewalk where there was no data stream.

But the second, medium-resolution camera did not provide good data to ground controllers after Monday's hookup.

Ryazanskiy redid the electrical connections — to no avail. He spotted no damage.

"I put everything in place as it used to be, maybe even better," Ryazanskiy radioed. "I think it's much better."

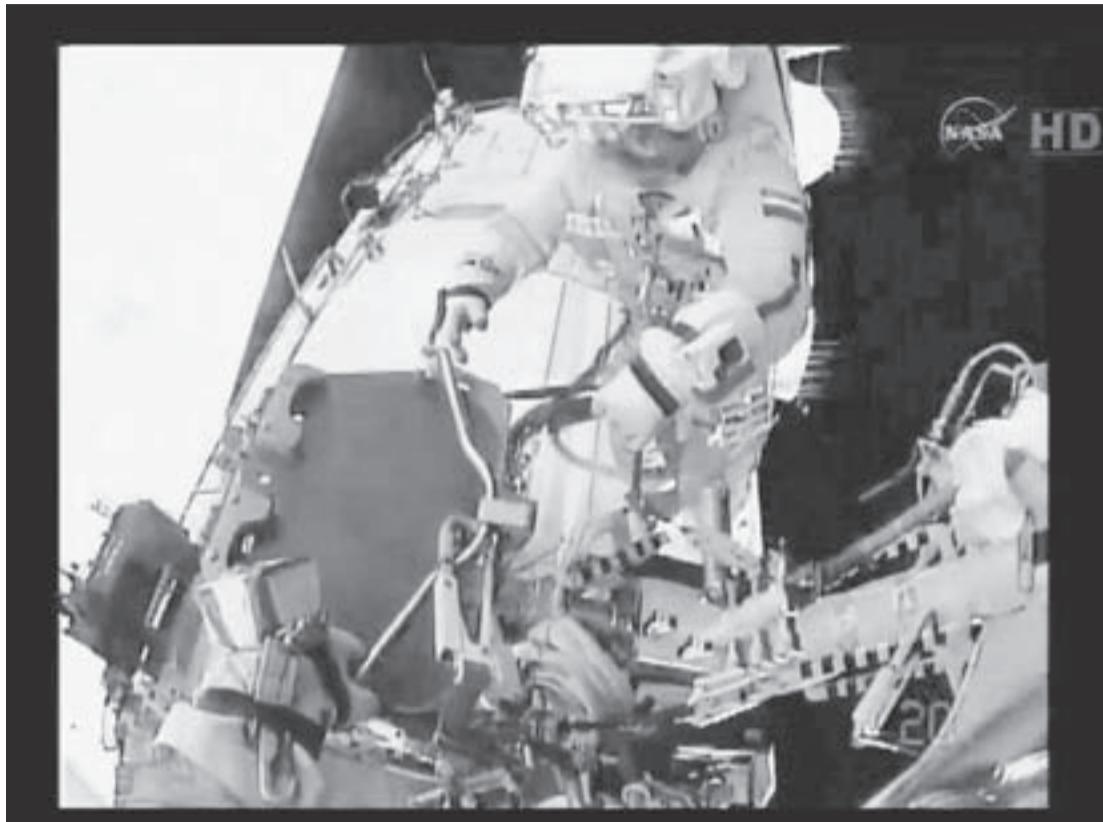
But still, the data link was flawed.

"Sergey, don't overdo it there," Russian Mission Control said, warning him not to damage the connectors.

The spacewalkers worked so hard — determined to accomplish the job this time — that Russian Mission Control outside Moscow urged them early in the spacewalk to "get your breath."

"We'll force ourselves to rest," one of the spacewalkers replied in Russian.

The astronauts had hooked up both Earth-observing cameras during a spacewalk right after Christmas. But ground controllers re-



In an image made from NASA TV, the helmet camera of flight engineer Sergey Ryazanskiy shows commander Oleg Kotov Monday Jan. 27, 2014, as they install a high-resolution camera outside the International Space Station. Ryazanskiy's gloved hand is at lower left. Kotov and Ryazanskiy made the spacewalk to install a pair of commercially provided cameras.

Associated Press

ceived no data from either camera, and the spacewalkers had to haul everything back in.

The problem was traced to indoor cabling and thought to be fixed.

Russian Mission Control ended Monday's spacewalk right around the six-hour mark, as originally planned. It was unclear what the next course of action would be regarding the incommunicado camera, but Kotov and Ryazanskiy were assured there would be no more spacewalks to deal with the problem.

"Well, at least one of them is working," one of them said.

All the external camera connections are believed to be solid, Russian Mission Control told the astronauts, and it was suggested that some files might be to

blame. The Canadian company that owns the two cameras, UrtheCast Corp., has a business plan to distribute the images collected. The

cameras were launched to the space station last November in a deal between the Vancouver-based UrtheCast and the Russian Space Agency.

UrtheCast seeks to post near-real-time video on its website and sell images. The company envisions customers wanting video feeds for environmental, agricultural and humanitarian purposes.

The company had expected the system to be fully operational by summer. Because of all the camera data trouble during the Dec. 27 spacewalk, which dragged on for eight hours, Kotov and Ryazanskiy had to put off other chores. Those tasks were completed Monday.

The four other space station astronauts — two Americans, one Japanese and another Russian — kept tabs on the spacewalk from inside.

Russian flight controllers outside Moscow directed Monday's 260-mile-high excursion.

Before going back inside, Kotov, the station's commander, was told to check out the orbiting outpost "as the master of the house."

"Let's take a picture for future generations," one of the spacewalkers said. And so they did. □

Kenya: Hi-tech help to stop human-lion conflict



In this photo taken Saturday, Jan. 25, 2014, a male lion walks shortly after being shot with tranquilizer darts, in order to fit a GPS-tracking collar, by a team led by the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) in Nairobi National Park in Kenya.

Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — Kenyan wildlife authorities are

fitting livestock-raiding lions with a collar that alerts

rangers when the predators venture out of Nairobi National Park.

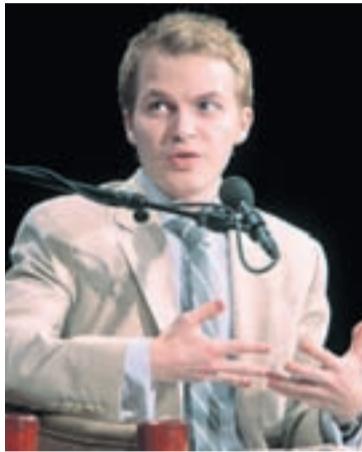
Livestock farmers, especially Maasai herdsman, track and kill lions to avenge the loss of animals, threatening the existence of 35 to 40 lions at the park on the outskirts of the Kenyan capital. Spokesman Paul Muya of the Kenya Wildlife Service, said Monday rangers will be able to move to areas where the lion have encroached using coordinates sent by the collars and return the animals to the park. The collars send GPS coordinates by text messages to a rangers' cell phones.

Two lions were fitted with collars Saturday, Muya said. Collars will be fitted to 10 lions from different prides. □

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MSNBC shuffles daytime following departures



In this Sept. 22, 2011 file photo released by the United Nations Foundation, Ronan Farrow, Special Adviser to the Secretary of State for Global Youth Issues, speaks during the Social Good Summit in New York.

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — MSNBC has given Ronan Farrow a time slot for his new show, part of a shuffling of the news network's daytime schedule.

Farrow is Mia Farrow's son and a former foreign policy official in the Obama administration. He will start Feb. 24 with a one-hour show at 1 p.m.

He'll be followed by a new show at 2 p.m. with Joy Reid, managing editor of The Grio.com. Current shows hosted by Tamron Hall and Andrea Mitchell will air at 11 a.m. and noon. □



Britain's Beatles make a windswept arrival in New York in this Feb. 7, 1964 file photo, as they step down from the plane that brought them from London, at Kennedy airport. From left to right, Ringo Starr, John Lennon, Paul McCartney and George Harrison.

Associated Press

Beatles JFK landing to be recreated 50 years later

LONDON (AP) — One of the most tumultuous welcomes in pop history is to be recreated next month when UK officials and a tribute band recreate the Beatles' historic 1964 landing at JFK airport. The band's first visit to the United States sparked wild

Beatlemania at the New York airport on Feb. 7, 1964. UK Trade and Investment officials along with VisitBritain officials will accompany The Cavern City Beatles to the airport next month in a bid to spark interest in Beatles-related tourism. The delegation will include

Liverpool city officials looking to lure tourists to the Beatles' home city to visit sites described in their songs.

John Lennon's half-sister Julia Baird said Monday that the band continues to play a vital economic role in Liverpool. □



In this Thursday, Oct. 6, 2011, file photo, Rosie O'Donnell talks to the audience during a taping of her show in Chicago.

Associated Press

Rosie O'Donnell coming back to 'View' as guest

NEW YORK (AP) — Proving nothing is impossible in the world of daytime television, Rosie O'Donnell is coming back to "The View" — at least for a day.

The show announced Monday that O'Donnell will be a guest on the daytime gabfest on Feb. 7. O'Donnell's tenure as a panelist on the ABC show seven years ago was notably stormy. O'Donnell said after leaving that she had experienced something like post-traumatic stress disorder, and show creator Barbara Walters said she resented the way O'Donnell dumped on the show. □

Quentin Tarantino sues website over leaked script

ANTHONY McCARTNEY
AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Quentin Tarantino sued the news and gossip website Gawker on Monday over a post that directed readers to a leaked copy of the Oscar-winning screenwriter's latest movie.

Tarantino's lawsuit accuses Gawker Media LLC of copyright infringement for posting a link to the 146-page script for a planned film titled "The Hateful Eight" last week. A link to

the script was posted on Gawker's Defamer blog and remained active on Monday afternoon, despite demands from Tarantino's lawyers to take it down, the lawsuit states.

"There was nothing newsworthy or journalistic about Gawker Media facilitating and encouraging the public's violation of (Tarantino's) copyright in the Screenplay, and it's conduct will not shield Gawker Media from liability for their unlawful activity," the law-

suit states. An email sent to Gawker seeking comment was not immediately returned.

Tarantino blasted the leak last week in an interview with Deadline.com and said he would abandon the project as a film. His lawsuit states he planned to publish the screenplay and that practice in the past has earned him hefty royalties and advances. His lawsuit states his damages as a result of the Gawker post will be more than \$1



In this Oct. 18, 2013 file photo, director Quentin Tarantino delivers a speech before receiving the Lumiere Award during the 5th edition of the Lumiere Festival, in Lyon, central France.

Associated Press

'Brokeback Mountain,' the opera, to open in Spain

HAROLD HECKLE
Associated Press

MADRID (AP) — It was a short story, then a Hollywood movie. Now the tragic tale of two cowboys in love is being reinvented again as "Brokeback Mountain" — the opera. Ahead of its world premiere Tuesday in Madrid, author Annie Proulx told The Associated Press that opera presented an chance to explore the complexities of the tale in a way that neither her own story nor the movie by director Ang Lee were able to do.

Proulx said she "rejoiced" when composer Charles Wuorinen approached her to write the libretto, because she understood that an opera "would give room, which the short story did not, and which the film was not particularly interested in doing," to open up the characters involved in the doomed love affair. Wuorinen said he tried to give the menacing nature of the rugged Wyoming landscape a greater presence in the opera than in the previous versions.

"It is very beautiful, as the film shows," Wuorinen told the AP, "but it is definitely not sentimental. It is not a romantic landscape. It's a deadly one — it's dangerous." "The music is very challenging, there's no question about that," said Canadian bass-baritone Daniel Okulitch, who appears as one of the cowboys, Ennis Del Mar. Love scenes between Del Mar and fellow cowboy Jack Twist, performed by American tenor Tom Randle — which caused a stir when the movie was first aired — are depicted discreetly on the opera's minimalist stage.

Wuorinen's score makes use of a wide range of percussion instruments that convey sounds like the wind and rain on Brokeback Mountain. The work is in English and runs until Feb. 11.

Proulx told reporters Monday there are no plans to



In this photo taken on Friday, Jan. 24, 2014, American tenor Tom Randle (Jack Twist), left, and Canadian bass-baritone Daniel Okulitch (Ennis del Mar), right, perform during the press rehearsal of the production "Brokeback Mountain" at the Teatro Real, in Madrid, Spain.

Associated Press

make an opera from her 1993 novel "The Shipping News," which won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction and

the National Book Award. It focuses on an American man who rebuilds his life in Newfoundland. □

Holocaust play 'The Soap Myth' goes digital

MARK KENNEDY
AP Drama Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The Holocaust play "The Soap Myth" was last seen in New York two years ago in a small off-Broadway theater. But its director decided it had to have another life and filmed it.

Now he's about to see the play take a digital leap: The recording will become available for streaming and download across the globe on Monday, which is International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

The broadcast will be available for a fee from Digital Theatre of London. On

Monday, the play will also be broadcast on a PBS affiliate in South Florida and the hope is more will sign up.

"The Soap Myth" by Jeff Cohen probes the questions of how history is manufactured and how we understand truth. □



This March 22, 2012 photo shows Greg Mullavy, left, and Andi Potamkin in a scene from the New York City production during dress rehearsal of "The Soap Myth," by Jeff Cohen.

Associated Press

DiCamillo wins Newbery for best children's book



This Dec. 13, 2008 file photo shows author Kate DiCamillo at a special screening of the new animated film "The Tale of Despereaux" in New York.

Associated Press

HILLEL ITALIE
AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Kate DiCamillo's "Flora & Ulysses," a comic superhero tale featuring a deadly vacuum cleaner and a mighty squirrel, has won the John Newbery Medal for the year's best work of children's literature. Brian Floca won the Randolph Caldecott Medal for his illustrations in "Locomotive," a story of the early years of train travel that Floca also wrote.

The awards, the most prestigious in children's publishing, were announced Monday by the American Library Association. DiCamillo, a popular and acclaimed author, won the Newbery a decade ago for "The Tales of Despereaux." The Library of Congress recently named her National Ambassador for Young People's Literature.

"When they called this morning about the Newbery, I don't think I said anything that made any sense," DiCamillo said in a telephone interview with The Associated Press. "I mostly just wept."

A native of Philadelphia who now lives in Minneapolis, the 49-year-old DiCamillo said the book's origins date back a few years. Her mother was dying and worried what would happen to her vacuum cleaner,

which the author ended up inheriting. Around the same time, she noticed an ailing squirrel on her property and was appalled when a friend suggested she whack the squirrel with a shovel and kill it.

"I started thinking about ways I could save the squirrel's life," DiCamillo said.

The Caldecott winner, "Locomotive," appeared on numerous lists for the best children's books of 2013. Floca's previous credits include illustrating the "Poppy" series by the Newbery-winning author Avi, the pen name for Edward Irving Wortis.

Floca, in a telephone interview, said he thought of a book on trains after he had completed a work in 2009 on the Apollo 11 space journey. One part of the research for "Locomotive" that surprised him: How colorful were the train engines of the 19th century.

"In early sketches, I had drawn these big, black locomotives," said Floca, 45, a resident of Brooklyn. "But in the 1860s they kept them polished. There was a Victorian aesthetic to it. They wanted the trains to be appealing to the public, and not frightening."

"So there are a lot of reds and blues and polished browns in the book."

Markus Zusak of "The Book Thief" fame received the Margaret A. Edwards Award for lifetime achievement. Brian Selznick, whose "The Invention of Hugo Cabret" won the Caldecott in 2008 and was later adapted into a film by Martin Scorsese, was chosen to give the May Hill Arbuthnot Honor Lecture, scheduled for 2015.

Marcus Sedgwick's "Midwinterblood" received the Michael L. Printz Award for best young adult book. Rita Williams-Garcia's "P.S. Be Eleven" won the Coretta Scott King Book Award for the best African-American book. □

Modern Family Matters



NICHOLAS KRISTOF

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When I asked readers for "neglected topics" that journalists should cover more in 2014, one of the suggestions was a delicate but vital topic: family breakdown and the rise of single-parent households.

This is an issue that, frustratingly, the right has hijacked and the left has been reluctant to confront. Yet it's intimately related to poverty in our country.

"It isn't politically correct to call attention to the effects of the increase in single women giving birth," wrote Colton, one reader who suggested the topic. "Three important effects are the greatly increased incidence of long-term poverty, poor development outcomes and poor educational achievement among the children."

"Our hesitancy to face the problem may result from fear of accusations of being moralists, racists, anti-woman, anti-freedom, supporting government decisions into personal decisions," Lucinda noted.

Conservatives are, I think, correct to highlight family stability as a fundamental issue that goes to the welfare of children as much as food stamps or anything else. Children raised by a single parent are more than three times as likely to live in poverty as those raised by two parents, according to census data.

After Daniel Patrick Moynihan raised the issue in 1965 in the context of black families, he was condemned in liberal circles as intolerant if not racist. Over time, though, there has been a growing appreciation that he was ahead of his time, and as the Urban Institute notes, the percentage of white babies born to unwed mothers is now the same as it was for black babies when he sounded his alarm.

Yet if the issue is critical, it often emerges as part of a narrative that hectors the poor for their poverty. Republicans focus on "personal irresponsibility" or suggest that there's nothing to be done about poverty until "those people" stop having kids outside of marriage.

As I see it, conservatives are right in their diagnosis that the issue is critical in addressing poverty, but they are wrong in their prescriptions, while liberals are often too politically correct to address the issue at all.

First, the backdrop.

At last count in the United States, almost 36 percent of births were to unmarried women, according

to census data. The birthrate for unmarried women is up 80 percent since 1980.

Furthermore, census data show that a majority of high school dropouts having babies are unmarried; only 9 percent of college graduates are. Two-thirds of black women giving birth are unmarried; just more than a quarter of white women are.

Of course, what matters isn't whether the parents have a marriage certificate but whether they are partners who are both committed to raising children they want and love. An Australian study found gay parenting had better outcomes on average, apparently because gay couples don't have kids by accident.

Conservatives blame war-on-poverty welfare programs for undermining marriage. Academic studies indicate that this effect, while real, is small. The percentage of births to single mothers has been rising steadily in the United States (and other countries) since the 1940s.

Republicans tried "marriage promotion" initiatives during the administration of George W. Bush, and these are worth testing, but, so far, they have failed the litmus test. They didn't work. However, there are several steps that we could take:

- First is to expand family planning so that teenagers and young adults don't have babies they don't want and are ill-prepared to care for. Four out of five teenage pregnancies are unintended, according to the Guttmacher Institute. It's promising that a randomized trial found that the Carrera pregnancy prevention curriculum in low-income schools reduced teen births by half. Family-planning initiatives save taxpayer money now spent on health care and the safety net, yet, after inflation, America's investment in Title X family planning has fallen some 70 percent since 1980. That's crazy.

- Second is to end America's disastrous experiment in mass incarceration. We quintupled incarceration rates since the 1970s, according to the Pew Center on the States, and, thus condemned millions of men - often men of color or with low incomes - to life at the margins and made them much less attractive as husbands. If the family has broken down, we helped break it.

- Third is to back outreach efforts and job programs that give young people a lift and a stake in the future. Programs like Nurse-Family Partnership that work with low-income mothers have a proven track record of keeping families together. Likewise, an evaluation found that of young mothers in an Illinois outreach effort called Options for Youth, 97 percent delayed a subsequent pregnancy.

Talk about personal responsibility! It's irresponsible on our part to fail to take these steps.

So, readers, thanks for raising this issue. And let's address it not with platitudes but with proven policies that don't just hail the family but also strengthen it. □



The Luck Of The Pontiff



GAIL COLLINS

© 2014 New York Times

President Barack Obama is going to visit the pope! He's been to the Vatican before, but not with this pope, who is perhaps the only person in the world almost everybody likes.

Except Rush Limbaugh, which sort of makes it even better. The president's visit, which is scheduled for March, comes at an interesting intersection in the two men's careers. Pope Francis can currently do no wrong, and Obama can do no right. Recently, his administration decided to move its Vatican Embassy into a more secure building, and the outcry was so intense that you'd think Obama had ordered a re-creation of the Sack of Rome.

"A slap in the face to the 78 million Catholics in the United States," one congressman screeched.

"Why would our president close our Embassy to the Vatican?" tweeted Jeb Bush. "Hopefully, it is not retribution for Catholic organizations opposing Obamacare."

As political tweets go, this is a keeper on two counts. First, we can once again marvel at Republican politicians' ability to insert the Affordable Care Act into everything. (Coming soon: How the individual mandate robbed Oprah Winfrey of an Oscar nomination.)

Second, we can mark the official end of the former governor of Florida's career as the safe, sane fallback option in 2016.

But about the Vatican Embassy: the State Department has been trying to move it into a compound that includes the U.S. Embassy to Italy. This will save money and improve security. Instantly, certain parties detected a plot. Two former ambassadors to the Vatican, Ray Flynn (Clinton) and Jim Nicholson (Bush), penned a blistering op-ed for The Wall Street Journal in which they called the move "a colossal mistake" that would squish the Holy See's separate identity. Diplomatically, they attributed more intense feelings to others. ("... many have seen the move as a deliberate slap at the Catholic Church and the pope; some may even detect veiled anti-Catholicism.")

Fast-forward to many variations on the headline "Obama Insults Catholics."

The State Department pointed out that the new quarters would be in an entirely different building, with an entirely different entrance than the Italian embassy. And that while the new embassy will not be in the Vatican, neither is the current one. Or that of any other country. The Vatican is only two-tenths of a square mile, and more than half of that is gardens.

"In fact, our new location is a tenth of a mile closer," Undersecretary of State Patrick Kennedy said.

"It's a clear diminishment of the importance of the Holy See post," Nicholson said.

Cynics might wonder why we have an embassy for the Vatican in the first place. The total population is about 800 people, which is approximately one-eighth the seating capacity of Radio City Music Hall. It has virtually none of the attributes you find in an actual country. It doesn't even have a cuisine.

But, obviously, nobody is going to disrespect the Vatican while Pope Francis is around. He won the world's heart by quickly doing a few things that were so

obvious, it's amazing no previous pontiff figured them out. Such as: If you are going to talk about the poor all the time, you should try to avoid gold furniture.

Without changing any of the church's reactionary rules on contraception, homosexuality or abortion, Francis changed the tone just by saying that Catholics should stop obsessing about sex. I cannot imagine what the nuns who ran my old high school would have thought about that theory. Really, it's hard to overestimate what an incredible time-saver this is.

And instead of just pleading for greater charity toward the poor, Francis decreed that the world needed to drop the idea that when the rich got richer, everybody eventually benefited. Trickledown economics amounted to a "crude and naive trust in the goodness of those wielding economic power." This would have been where he lost Rush Limbaugh.

Ken Langone, the billionaire co-founder of Home Depot, told Cardinal Timothy Dolan that a rich benefactor to a rebuilding project at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York might hesitate to cough up his promised million-dollar donation because of the pope's attitude. Dolan said he assured Langone that while the pope loves the poor, "he also loves rich people."

Republican budget guru Rep. Paul Ryan said the pope's apparent lack of enthusiasm for the capitalist system was due to an unfortunate upbringing. "The guy is from Argentina. They haven't had real capitalism in Argentina," he told The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. Even if Francis was down on capitalism, no capitalists wanted to sound down on Francis. Meanwhile, Obama has spent the past five years dodging calls for new taxes and protecting the insurance industry from health care reform. Stocks have been at an all-time high, and Wall Street hates him. The moral is: It's way easier to be pope. □

Intensive Tutoring and Counseling Found to Help Struggling Teenagers

MOTOKO RICH

© 2014 New York Times

CHICAGO - By the time they reach eighth grade, according to federal tests, half of all African-American schoolchildren have not mastered the most basic math skills that educators consider essential for their grade level.

A new paper being released Monday by the National Bureau of Economic Research suggests a promising approach for helping the most challenged students, who often arrive in high school several years behind their peers.

The study, which was conducted by a team led by Jens Ludwig, the codirector of the University of Chicago Urban Education Lab, provided a program of intense tutoring, in combination with group behavioral counseling, to a group of low-income ninth- and 10th-grade African-American youths with weak math skills, track records of absences or disciplinary problems.

Those students learned in an eight-month period the equivalent of what the average American high school student learns in math over three years of school, as measured by standardized test scores, over and above what a similar group of students who did not receive the tutoring or counseling did.

The study was conducted in 2012-13 in a randomized trial comparing groups of male students at W.R.

Harper High School, an impoverished neighborhood on Chicago's South Side, a site of frequent gang violence. Of the 106 teenagers in the study, all but one were eligible for free or reduced lunch and about one-quarter of them had been diagnosed with a learning disability.

In addition to the test scores, far more of the students in the program met indicators of being on track to graduate from high school on time than their peers who were not given tutoring or counseling.

"So many people now are convinced that results like

this aren't possible at all for disadvantaged teens," Ludwig said. "More and more people are of the view that you've got to reach poor kids by age 6, or it's too late and the effects of entrenched poverty are already too profound." The problem, he said, was that it was nearly impossible for a teacher in a class of 25 or 30 students to tailor lessons to individual needs, particularly with those who struggle to understand

"If we're going to instead take the most disadvantaged students who are the furthest behind and do this targeted one hour a day, that seems extremely sensible," said Matthew M. Chingos, a fellow at the Brookings Institution's Brown Center on Education Policy. Chingos was not involved in the study. The challenge that teachers face was apparent on a morning in December in Nusirat Olaniran's sopho-

with another classroom at the school, where tutors sat across from pairs of ninth- and 10th-grade boys, their heads quietly bent over white erasable boards. Some reviewed basic multiplication while others plotted lines on graph paper. If a student got stuck or appeared restless, the tutors quickly redirected them. "They absolutely do way more work just because there is a body in front of them," said Devon James,

a unit of Match Education. Because tutors do not have to manage large classes or develop curriculum, he said, people not qualified as teachers could still make effective tutors.

"These are really supplements to the normal things that schools are doing," said Lawrence F. Katz, a Harvard economist who was not involved in the study.

"They are concrete and seem to be things that can



Charles Dorsey, a sophomore at W.R. Harper High School, shares his work during Bian Oliver's Algebra II class in Chicago. A study of struggling African-American high school students in Chicago found that providing focused guidance sharply improved learning, but the approach is a costly one to replicate.

(Sally Ryan/The New York Times)

concepts they should have learned years earlier.

"A lot of education reforms that we have in high school are to get the ninth-grade teacher to teach algebra better," Ludwig said. "But for the kid who doesn't get math, saying it louder is not going to help."

The cost of providing tutoring and counseling was about \$4,400 per student. Previous researchers who have examined the benefits of small-group tutoring have said its cost would be prohibitive on a large scale. But tutoring could be more cost-effective than efforts to shrink class sizes across the board.

more geometry class at Harlan Community Academy, one of the 12 high schools where Ludwig and his research partners have expanded their study to see if they will achieve similar results.

As Olaniran reviewed a recent quiz, one boy repeatedly demanded permission to go to the bathroom. Another boy and a girl gleefully fenced with pencils at the front of the room. By the time the bell rang, Olaniran had managed only a few moments with a pair of students who had gotten three-quarters of the test questions wrong.

The contrast was striking

one of the tutors.

The researchers modeled the tutoring on a program developed by Match Education, a Boston-based nonprofit group that provides tutoring for about 2,200 students. The group hires recent college graduates or retirees willing to work for an average salary of \$17,000 a year full-time for 11 months. Generally, the tutors are not credentialed teachers.

"There is a huge supply of people who want to do something before they go down the career path of law or medicine or business," said Alan Safran, the president of Match Tutors,

be replicated in different settings. It's not the magic of 'we don't know how to make a better teacher, but some teachers are better than others.'

Mayor Rahm Emanuel of Chicago has said that if the program continues to generate results, he hopes to extend the tutoring and counseling to more schools.

"When you close the achievement gap that significantly you have to pay attention," he said.

For the study, the behavioral counseling was provided by Youth Guidance, a Chicago-based group, under a program called Becoming a Man, or BAM. □